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SIXPENCE

Edited by Sir John Hammerton

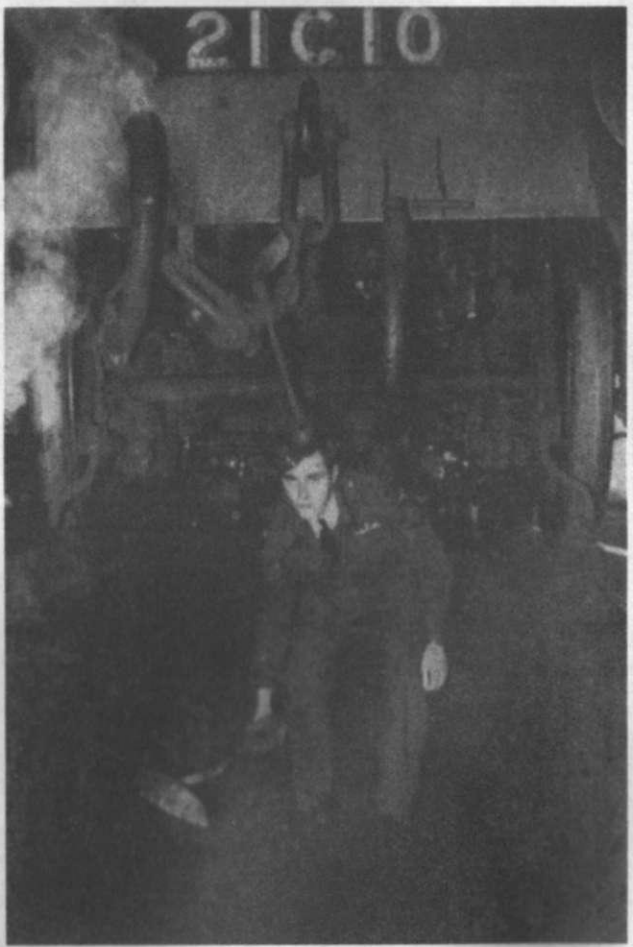
AUGUST 18, 1944

TWO OF BRITAIN'S INVASION CHIEFS are Lieut.-Gen. Sir Miles Dempsey, K.C.B., D.S.O., M.C. (right), Commander of the British 2nd Army in Normandy, and Lieut.-Gen. Sir Richard Nugent O'Connor, K.C.B., D.S.O., M.C. (left), Commander of British armoured forces in the Caen area; aged 55, General O'Connor won the D.S.O. and bar and the M.C. in the 1914-18 war. Both Generals served in North Africa, and both were at the Staff College, Camberley, with General Sir Bernard Montgomery. *Photo, British Official*

Our Roving Camera Sees War's Impact at Home

HARVESTING IN FULL SWING on the Buckinghamshire hills: the crop is oats, and girls in the foreground are stooking sheaves to allow them to dry out before they are collected. People from all walks of life are holiday volunteers and spare-time workers this year, as they were last, when 500,000 became amateur "farmers' boys."

CONTROL ROOM of one of London's new deep tunnel shelters, first of which was opened on July 9, 1944, is the nerve-centre of a refuge designed to hold 8,000 people. Amenities include bunks, cloakroom facilities, canteens, and well-equipped medical aid posts staffed by St. John Ambulance and British Red Cross nurses under a resident doctor.



SERVICE MEN LEND A HAND in vital war tasks in Britain, to help meet the shortage in civilian man-power. The Royal Navy, the Army and the R.A.F. have each loaned some of their personnel; as volunteers for this "change-over" they continue to wear Service clothes and receive their normal rates of pay. Some gain proficiency as railway firemen and cleaners: Sgt.-Pilot Forster, very much "grounded," emerges from beneath a locomotive after emptying the ashbox (above). Royal Naval Commandos, who have been on several operations, help after flying bomb visitations; their main job is re-tiling roofs of damaged buildings (left). *Photos, Sport & General, Planet News, New York Times Photos, Associated Press*

THE BATTLE FRONTS

by Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

WHETHER Hitler and Himmler really succeeded in crushing the revolt of the generals did not, I think, matter much to us. The mischief was already done, for though the Reichswehr may continue to fight a losing battle it is impossible to believe that any army can maintain its morale when it knows that numbers of its most esteemed leaders have openly shown that they consider the war has been lost—and that through the incompetence of the High Command. The amazing success of the Russian offensive, skilfully as it has been conducted and despite its overpowering weight, could not have been achieved if the German Army as a whole retained anything of its former spirit.

One cannot help suspecting that some at least of the astonishing number of German generals who have been taken prisoner knew that an internal clash was imminent, and preferred captivity to being forced to take sides in a struggle whose outcome was still doubtful. They can claim that they remained with their troops, but it is hard to believe that they tried to take opportunities to escape with some part of their forces before the net closed. Granted that the action of partisans and the Russian cavalry probably added to the difficulty of escape, and that orders from Hitler not to retreat may have obscured their better judgement. Such an order might often involve Divisional H.Q. in the battle, but even they and still more Corps H.Q. should normally aim at being in a position to take a broad view of the situation and to retain power of exercising control.

RUSSIA Koniev's offensive on the Lvov front has had a more rapid and complete success than might have been expected, for here if anywhere the Germans were fully prepared. Yet it is on this front that the break-through has made the most astonishing progress, and there have been most evident signs of the enemy's demoralization. Hitler's orders that Lvov should be held at all costs invited a new catastrophe, and the same applies to Brest-Litovsk, Bialystok and Dvinsk—the capture of all these fortress towns with their large garrisons, announced on July 27 and 28, of coûrse representing an immensely more important success than their abandonment by the retreating army.

By the end of the first month of the offensive it was evident that Koniev and Rokossovsky were driving with all speed to gain the crossings of the Vistula, while Zakharov was well placed to cover Rokossovsky's right flank and to turn the line of the Narew River. It was clear that the Germans would be hard put to it to hold the line of the Vistula and Warsaw. It was obvious too that the three Baltic armies were aiming at isolating and destroying Lindemann's northern armies.

It was not so clear whether Cherniakovsky and Zakharov's armies would simultaneously attempt the invasion of East Prussia from the east. They had forced a crossing over the Niemen and established bridge-heads on its left bank, and by doing so had apparently drawn most of the available German reserves. But whether stiffening opposition had checked further progress, making a pause necessary to close up and consolidate communications, or whether it suited Russian plans better to wait till East Prussia has become a dangerous salient, was a matter for speculation.

There had been an absence of information from this section of the front lately, but as far as could be gathered Cherniakovsky was making no vigorous attempt to close in on Kaunas. It seemed possible that he might be playing on German anxiety to save East Prussia and would not press his attack until Rokossovsky and Zakharov threatened to isolate the forces defending it. Whatever the future held in store, the achievements of the Red Army in the first month of the offensive had established a new speed record and had once again exposed the amazing incompetence of the German High Command.

FRANCE In Normandy, perhaps owing to a somewhat loose use of the word "break-through," expectations were disappointed when the massive attack which cleared the Caen bottle-neck turned out to have only limited objectives. Personally, I never imagined that a break-through with unlimited objectives was attempted. The mere facts that no attacks were made simultaneously on other sectors and that the attack was delivered on a very narrow front seemed to indicate clearly that the object was to remove the cork from the bottle-neck and to gain a bridge-head in the open country beyond.

Admittedly, all objectives were not gained in the initial attack, but it should be recognised that although the cork had been removed the bottle-neck remained, cramping immediate exploitation of success. The existence of the bottle-neck was in fact sufficient evidence that no offensive on a great scale could be staged until a substantial bridge-head was secured beyond it and new routes opened. Presumably but for the interruption caused by weather the initial success would have been followed up promptly in order to gain a bridge-head of the size required.

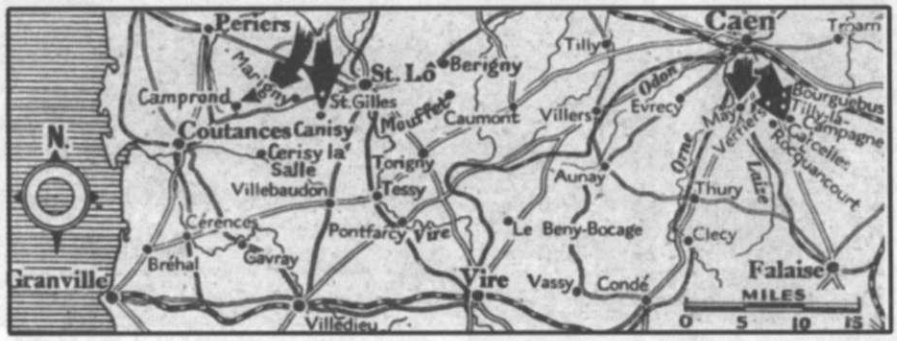
FAILURE to reach all the objectives aimed at led to criticism of the tactical methods adopted, particularly the use of tanks to lead the assault. I would not, however, attempt to form any opinion on the point without much more detailed knowledge of the terrain conditions and of the information available when plans were drawn up. It is clear that Rommel reacted with great speed, and it is possible that too much reliance was placed on his movements being hampered by the cratering of roads. No doubt alternative routes had been reconnoitred with a view to the rapid switch of his anti-tank weapons.

THE preliminary air bombardment of the factory area has also been criticized, but it seems to have accomplished its object and to have been skilfully planned to minimize the disadvantages revealed at Cassino. I should imagine, however, that tanks were used to lead the assault on the grounds that they could traverse the devastated area at greater speed than infantry and might therefore have a better chance of anticipating the enemy's reaction. Critics, in any case, might allow for the fact that if everything always went as planned a general's job would be an easy one, and, in particular, that our troops in Normandy are opposed by the pick of the German Army commanded by a general who certainly has great executive capacity.

Although the clearance of the Caen bottle-neck has been a step forward, preparatory to launching a full-scale offensive, the bridge-head across the Orne will probably require enlargement before anything decisive can be attempted. The time has come, however, when preparatory operations will be on a greater scale and on wider fronts.

ITALY Meanwhile, in Italy, General Alexander's armies continue to make steady progress, and Kesselring is back in the forward zone of the Gothic Line: the time must be approaching when the German High Command will have to decide whether he is to attempt to hold that position at all costs or to withdraw to the Alpine passes. In view of the lessening importance of the Italian air bases owing to the Russian advance, and the pressing need of the Germans for reserves, it would not be surprising if the latter alternative were adopted. Possibly, however, hopes of gathering the harvest of the Po valley might affect the decision.

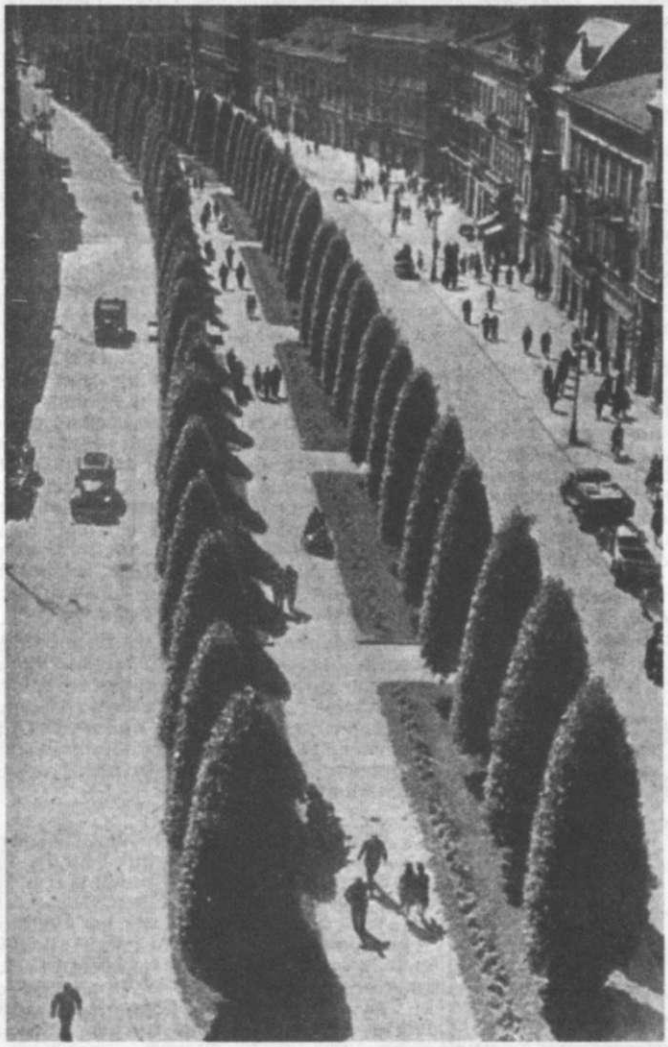
RUSSIAN PRESSURE on the 1,000-mile battle front extending from Pskov in the north to Stanislavov in the south is indicated by the arrows above. By August 1, 1944, the Red Army was closing on Warsaw, moving towards Riga, capital of Latvia, and approaching East Prussia. *By courtesy of The Daily Telegraph*



IN THE NORMANDY BATTLES the Allies, thrusting on from St. Lo area, took the towns of St. Gilles and Marigny on July 27, 1944, continuing past Coutances, Villebaudon and Cerences, to capture, on July 31, Avranches, south-east of Granville. Around Caen progress was limited, but new British attacks in the Caumont area had progressed well, a deep salient having been made in the German line towards Vire in the south. *By courtesy of the News Chronicle*

Russians Crack More Bastions in Berlin Drive

PSKOV, strongpoint covering roads to southern Estonia, was captured by troops of the 3rd Baltic Front, under General Ivan Maslennikov (above), on July 23, 1944. The town was set ablaze by the retreating enemy (right).



LVOV'S TREE-LINED MAIN STREET, the spacious and imposing Academic Boulevard (left), as it was in pre-war days. Economic, political and regional centre of the Ukraine, big railway junction and bastion covering strategic roads to southern Poland, Lvov was captured by Red Army troops of the Ist Ukrainian Front on July 27, 1944. Soviet tanks (right) manoeuvre into position during the final encirclement of the enemy that garrisoned the city. For two days street battles raged, tanks, cavalry and infantry taking part in the action which cleared it at last of the invaders. See also map in p. 195. and illus. p. 201.

Photos, U.S.S.R. Official, Planet News, Pictorial Press

Great Gaps Torn in Nazi Line across France

WEST OF ST. LO, captured by U.S. Forces on July 18, 1944, the Americans launched a new attack on July 25 to break the German hold on the south of the Cotentin peninsula. By August 3 their armoured columns had driven beyond Avranches and reached Rennes and Dinan in Brittany. Encountering enemy fire, U.S. troops dashed across a road to cover (left). An American tank shepherds in German prisoners waving white flags (above), hatless and dishevelled, representatives of thousands more.

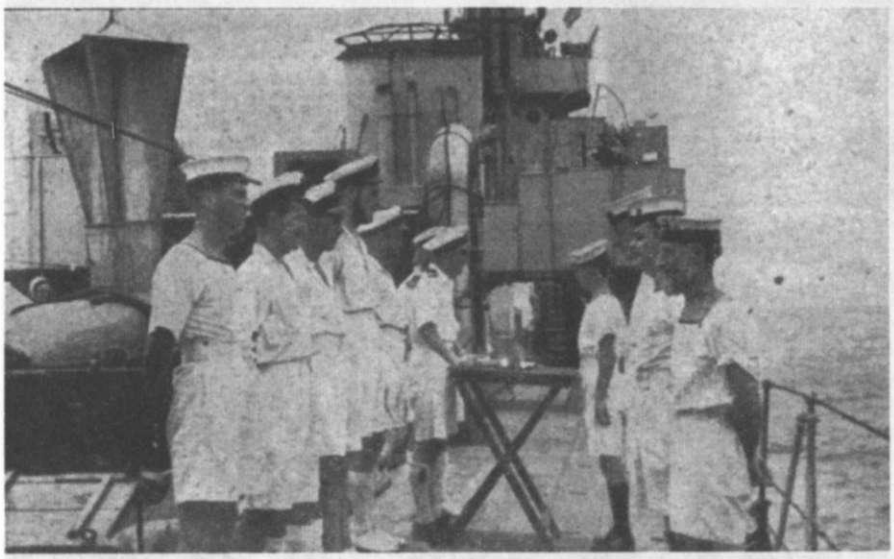
ON THE CAEN FRONT the British 2nd Army, taking up the running of the American offensive, attacked around Caumont on July 30. Faced by six of the nine German armoured divisions in Normandy, they made good progress, reaching Vire by Aug. 3. In a rain-flooded street a British military policeman directs troops (above). Mr. Churchill visited Normandy again on July 21 and was photographed with British soldiers (right). *Photos, British and U.S. Official, British Newspaper Pool, Keystone*

THE WAR AT SEA

by **Francis E. McMurtrie**

FROM the very start of this war, Germany put her entire trust in the U-boat as the principal weapon with which to defeat British sea power. In this respect the enemy plan of campaign differed materially from that of thirty years ago. In 1914 scarcely any German seems to have realised the potency of the submarine as a means of destroying shipping; and during 1915 and the early part of 1916 its use was limited by a reluctant consideration for the feelings of neutrals. Not until Jutland had made it plain that there was no hope of gaining victory at sea by surface battle was all restraint abandoned.

As a result the United States was drawn into the war following persistent attacks on American vessels engaged in peaceful trade. Thus in the ultimate issue the U-boat campaign proved Germany's undoing, though not until its prosecution had inflicted well-nigh fatal damage, as figures attest. During four black weeks of 1917 nearly 900,000 tons gross of shipping were sent to the bottom. Had this rate of destruction continued, it was a mathematical certainty that by the end of the year there would have been just enough tonnage left to Britain to bring food, leaving nothing over for the transport of troops, munitions, fuel and other vital necessities.



H.M.S. VERITY, veteran 1,120-ton destroyer, recently celebrated her 25th anniversary. Launched in 1919, she has served all over the world. Engaged in convoy work on the outbreak of war, in 1940 she took General McNaughton, the then G.O.C. Canadian Forces, to France, later bringing Queen Wilhelmina from the Hook of Holland. During Dunkirk she rescued some 20,000 soldiers. Here her Commanding Officer is receiving requests—which may vary from leave, promotion or welfare to "permission to grow a full set of whiskers." *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

Recalling these facts, it seemed to Hitler and his naval advisers that if submarine warfare were waged without limit from the start, its success might be regarded as a certainty. With this in mind, the German Government in 1935 concluded an agreement with Britain by which, while the ratio of German naval strength was fixed as 35 per cent of that of the Royal Navy, the *Reichsmarine* was permitted to build submarines (a right denied by the Treaty of Versailles) up to a percentage of 45 in the same relation.

U-BOAT construction had already been resumed before this agreement was actually signed; and it was no doubt calculated that in another four years enough submarines would be available to furnish the means for prosecuting a fresh war against the world's sea transport. Of course, the fact that Germany had also subscribed to a pact renouncing unrestricted submarine warfare meant nothing to the Germans; it was just another scrap of paper.

During the past four and a half years the enemy again came near to success in their nefarious undertaking. In 1941-42 shipping losses were so severe that the submarines seemed to the German naval authorities to have victory within their grasp. During those two years the Battle of the Atlantic was for the Allies a desperate struggle for survival, but in 1943 came the turn of the tide. Now more U-boats are being sunk every month than merchant ships, and the German submarine service has come to be regarded as a suicide club.

NOT until the struggle is over and access has been had to enemy records shall we know exactly how many German, Italian and Japanese submarines have paid the penalty for their depredations. It has been stated that Italian losses total 84, which is probably pretty close to the truth. It would leave the Italian Navy with a residue of between 60 and 70, excluding vessels of the midget type. Some of these, of course, are in German hands and may have been destroyed since. Japanese figures are more uncertain, but it is probable that more than 20 have been accounted for in various ways. This would leave over 100 still in service, without allowing for losses of which nothing is known outside Japan.

Germany possessed 70 submarines at the outbreak of war, as compared with 28 in 1914. They have been added to at a far faster rate than in 1914-18, when 344 were actually completed, 226 more begun but not finished, and 212 projected but never built. By mass production methods the Germans are believed to have turned out over 1,000 U-boats since September, 1939, including some of a special supply type, which for a time were used to refuel and revictual submarines out on patrol. It is probably no exaggeration to assess the losses of the U-boat flotillas in this war at 50 per cent —or not less than 500 submarines to date. In other words, out of every two U-boats that have sailed to prey upon shipping one has failed to return.

Admiral C. W. NIMITZ (right), C.-in-C. U.S. Pacific Fleet. Recent outstandingly successful U.S. Navy actions were the bombardments preceding landings on Guam Island and Tinian, in the Marianas group, on July 20 and 23, 1944, respectively. *Photo, Keystone*

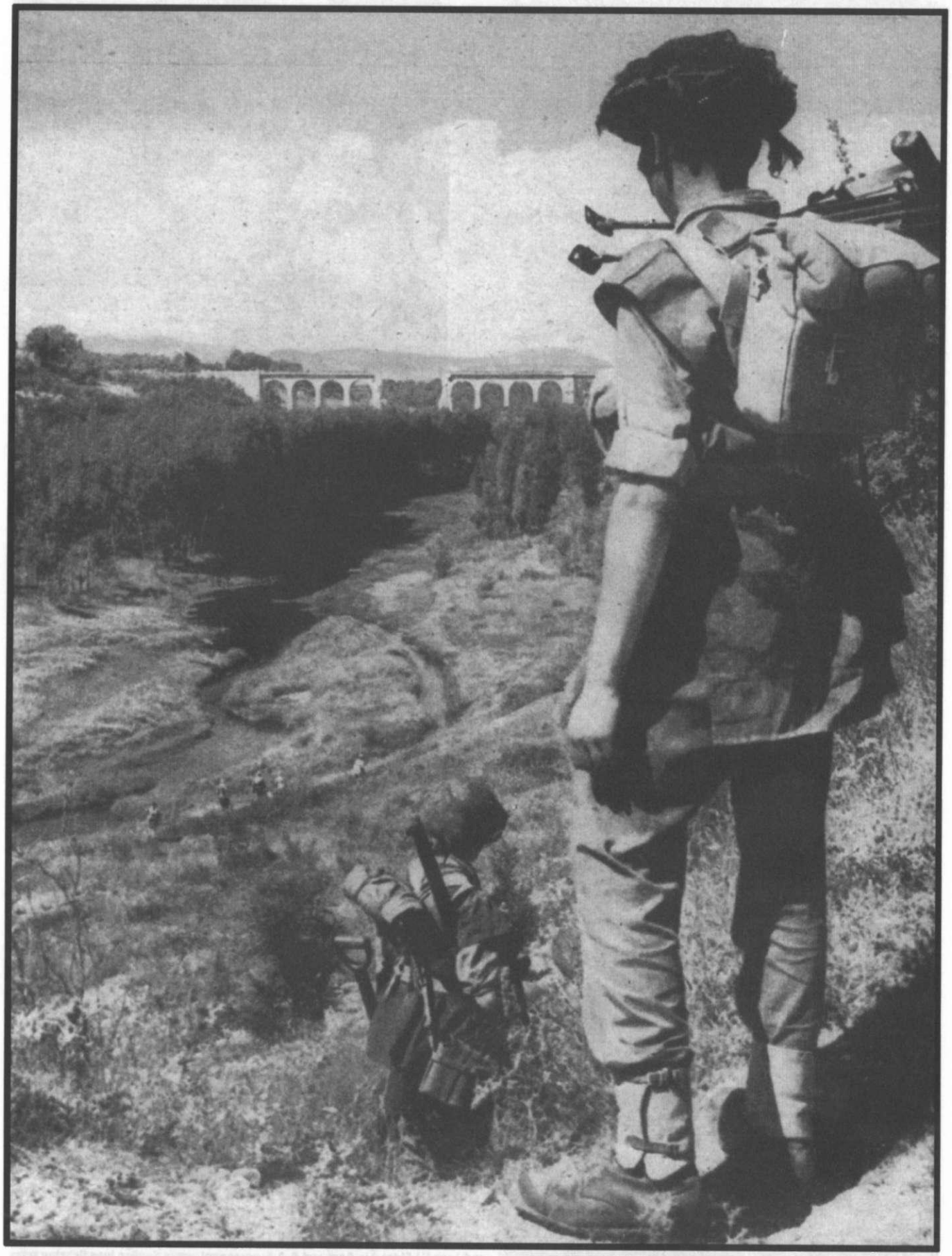
Unquestionably the knowledge that under present conditions there is only a faint chance of survival must be disheartening for the personnel. At the present time the rate of slaughter of U-boats almost certainly is higher than one in two, which has been assumed to be the average for the whole war. Moreover, the majority of the more skilful and daring of the enemy submarine captains has been killed or taken prisoner, leaving only the less efficient and enterprising to carry on the conflict. In such circumstances it may be assumed that there is no strong desire on their part—still less on that of their crews—to make contact with convoys, as even if a successful attack can be made, escape afterwards is highly unlikely. This alone goes far to explain the rarity of U-boat attacks on shipping in recent months.

OWING to the high proportion of surface blockade runners intercepted en route from Japan to Germany during 1943, an effort is believed to have been made to carry on the traffic by submarines. The vessels chosen for this purpose were probably the large supply U-boats already mentioned, together with a few big Italian submarines fitted out specially. Even in this service submarines are believed to have proved a failure, so that Germany's desperate need of rubber, gum, tin, oil and other Eastern products has not been relieved; nor is Japan's shortage of machine tools, ball bearings, and so on, likely to be assuaged by anything the Germans can send in return.

Slowly but surely the war is drawing nearer to Japan. Tinian Island, like its neighbour Saipan, has now passed into American occupation with its fine airfield. Reconquest of Guam is making steady progress, and the bombardment of the Palau group is another warning to the enemy that retribution approaches closer daily. In the Indian Ocean the port of Sabang, at the north-western extremity of Sumatra, has again been attacked by Allied ships and aircraft of the Eastern Fleet, and its equipment and storage facilities have suffered damage. The appointment of Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser to be Commander-in-Chief of the Eastern Fleet may be taken as an indication that the time is not far distant when fresh attacks will be made on Japan from this quarter.

Shortage of shipping is perhaps the greatest trouble from which Japan is suffering at the present time. Not only have a great many transports and supply vessels been destroyed by air attack in the Solomons, New Guinea and the Dutch Indies, but United States submarines are waging an unending campaign against enemy shipping in Far Eastern waters, sinking a larger tonnage every month

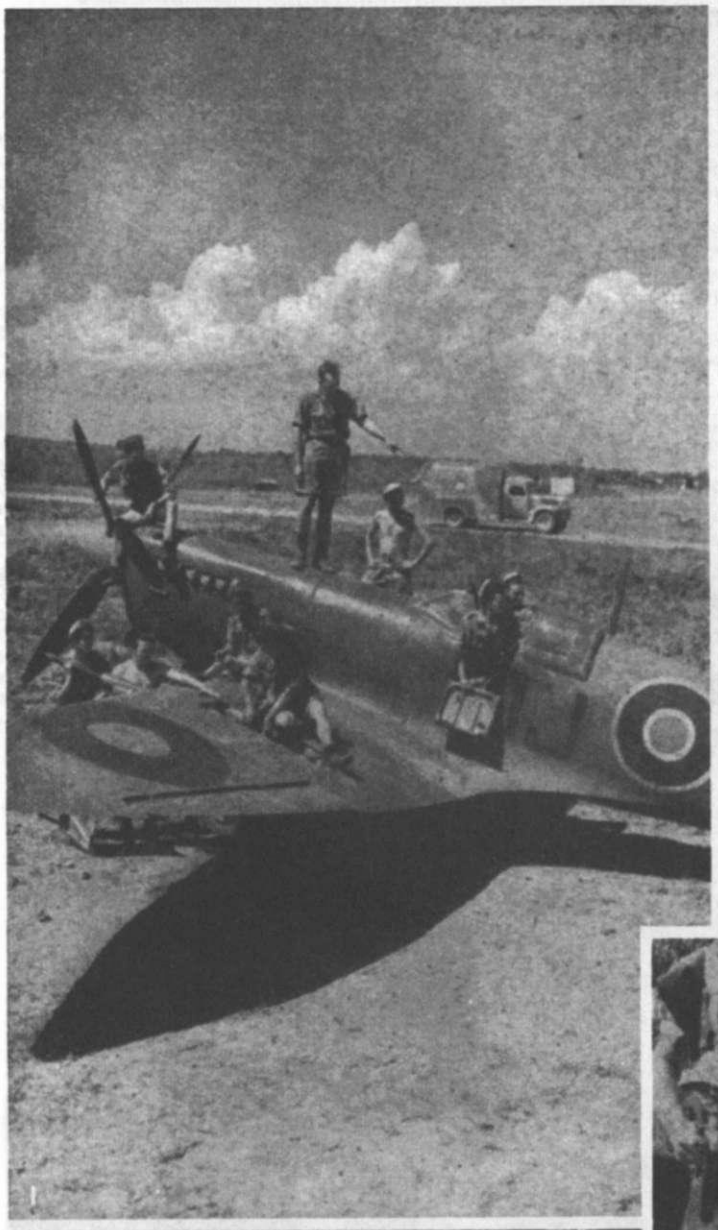
8th Army Riflemen Patrol the Arno Valley

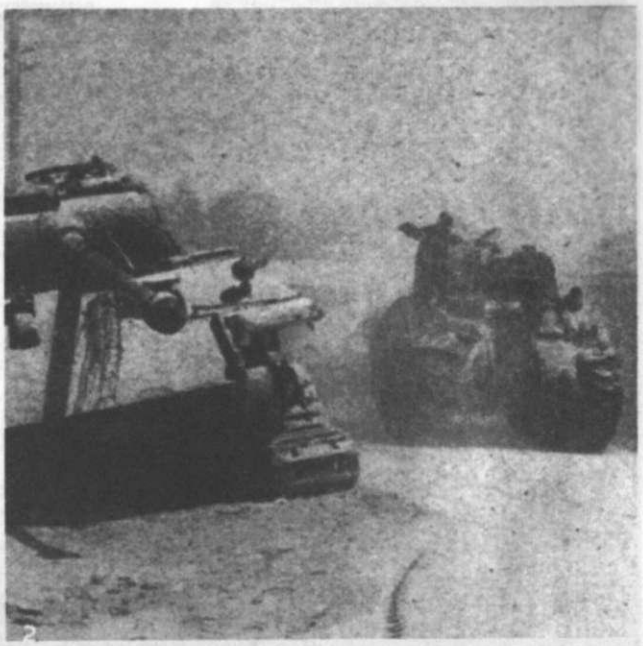


THE RIFLE BRIGADE reconnoitred the difficult country ahead for concealed German positions in the valley of the Arno, north of the captured Italian town of Arezzo (see page 200). Defending the approaches to Florence five German divisions were massed by August 2, 1944, in a 30-mile arc—including their best formations in Italy : the 4th Parachute Division and the 3rd and 29th Panzer Grenadiers, supported by Tiger tanks. The Rifle Brigade has been serving in Italy as part of an armoured division since March.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Advance to Arezzo Heralds Fall of Florence





TRIUMPH FOR BRITISH TANKS, guardsmen, riflemen and Indian troops of the 8th Army was the capture, on July 16, 1944, of Arezzo, in the centre of the coast-to-coast battle line in Italy and the keypoint of the German defences guarding Florence and the Gothic Line. It was taken after a three-weeks' struggle, the final days of which cost the Germans dearly in men and material. Our aircraft had gone into action in the preliminary stages of this advance, and here (1) Fleet Air Arm and R.A.F. personnel get a Seafire into fighting trim at a forward airfield. A Sherman tank passes a de-tracked and knocked out German Panther (2). British troops dug in to give covering fire to patrols clearing a village near Arezzo (3). Infantry on the march, one of them wearing a "non-regulation" sun-hat (4).

Photos, British Official

Irresistible Red Armies Swept On Into Poland

OVER A RIVER AND ONWARDS surged tanks, guns and men of the 1st Ukrainian Front, under Marshal Koniev, towards Lvov, key to Southern Poland (see illus. p. 196) ; for days completely encircled, the city was captured on July 27, 1944. Lvov is an important junction of railways to Warsaw, Cracow, Breslau and Budapest ; it was the third biggest city of pre-war Poland.

SIXTY THOUSAND GERMANS, including generals, marched through Moscow on July 17, 1944—but not as the conquerors they had hoped to be. Captured in White Russia, they were on their way to prison camps in Siberia, watched by grimly silent crowds of Muscovites. German forces had advanced to within 12 miles of Moscow in 1941 ; their repulse was due in part to Marshal of Tanks Pavel A. Rotmistrov (in circle), Russia's greatest exponent in the theory and practice of tank warfare.

Photos, U.S.S.R. Official, Pictorial Press

IN THE FRONT LINE NEAR CAGNY, south-east of Caen, men of the 2nd Army await the order to attack. Each carries a pick or shovel ready for instant digging-in on reaching new positions, and a D.R. stands by to take back word of the assault to headquarters. This incident was a preliminary to operations which resulted, at the end of July, in the establishment south-east of Caen of a new line extending from Caumont, east of the Orne river, through Bourguebus and Frénouville to the neighbourhood of Troarn, a distance of about 20 miles, with a varying depth, in the whole area won, of from 2 to 10 miles. *Photo. British Official*

They Tend the Front Line Sick and Wounded

Ministering angels of the battlefields go to their tasks from Britain with no illusions as to the hardships and perils they themselves must face in the execution of their duties. Theirs is no glamorous holiday from the humdrum round of home duties but a stern facing-up to tragic realities of the fighting front, as shown here by GEORGE GODWIN. See also page 138.

QUEEN Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service has made known its need for a thousand nurses for the front line, to staff such medical and surgical units as mobile casualty clearing stations for succouring Allied wounded in the battlefields of Western Europe and Italy. In no previous war have nurses been called upon to work in such conditions of extreme danger, hardship and endurance.

Mrs. L. J. WILKINSON, O.B.E., R.R.C., Matron-in-Chief of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service. Serving in the 1914-18 war, when she was awarded the Royal Red Cross (First Class), she was in France again in 1940. She gained the O.B.E. in 1943.
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

Let us glance for a moment at how the whole problem of nursing was brought within the pattern of the national "man-power" at the start. In 1939 the Ministries of Health and National Service required all State Registered Nurses and Certified Midwives to register. That was the first occasion when a census of nurses had been made on national lines. It revealed the fact that the country had a reservoir of some 80,000 qualified nurses and midwives, and it made possible their appropriate distribution. In April 1943 the Ministry of Labour required all nurses and midwives to register at their local offices, for by that time we had need of 11,000 nurses.

NURSES were then classified into groups —those immediately available, those unemployed, in industry or married, and those who had nursing experience but were not engaged in nursing. Between 1939 and 1943 many nurses and women with nursing experience had entered the women's Services. They were henceforth free to quit the Services for their own job of nursing. And those who had gone on to war work were taken off and returned to this great central pool. So much for the general way in which this vital public service has been directed during the war. What of the Q.A.I.M.N.S.?

This Service, whose grey and scarlet uniform is everywhere familiar, is divided into three sections. First, the regular section, then the reserve, then the T.A.N.S. (Territorial Auxiliary Nursing Service). It is for this Service that the gallant thousand are required. What sort of conditions will they have? Their work, it is true, will be done under the hardest conditions; but they will have the compensation of possessing a higher status than ever before. For these women will rank as officers and wear the appropriate rank badges—lieutenant, captain, major, and so on. In place of the familiar scarlet and grey they will wear khaki, for there is a shortage of the standard cloth. For the rest of the war period these nurses will wear a uniform like the A.T.S., which is a great break with tradition. Their pay starts at £105 a year, all found.

IT is not generally known that the V.C. is a decoration which may be won by a woman, for the regulations governing that award state that the act of gallantry must be one performed in the face of the enemy in the field. It is therefore possible that this war will see the award of the V.C. to the first woman recipient. In the past most army and other service nursing has been done at base hospitals. Today these nurses share the full ardours of war and already there is a casualty list which tells more eloquently than words of the reality of these perils. It was nurses of the Q.A.I.M.N.S. who stuck it out on the beaches at Dunkirk in 1940; these staffed the long processions of ambulance trains in France. They have served in hospital ships, and in many countries, and now again in France. They have worked under perpetual bombings and under intense shell-fire.

Yet, despite a magnificent record of courage, devotion and endurance, few stories have been told of these self-sacrificing and uncomplaining women. Incidentally, it is the hall-mark of the "pukka" nurse that she does not dramatize her work, but takes it in a matter-of-fact way, doing her job quietly and efficiently in every manner of circumstance. There was one such nurse who was torpedoed and shot into the sea. For twelve days she was one of a party in a lifeboat. She held a daily "sick parade," she comforted men when hysteria broke down their courage, she operated on boils with an iodine-dipped safety-pin, she instituted a daily salt-water bucket bath to allay thirst. In short, she handled the whole human boatload with the competence and quiet assurance of a Ward Sister in a civilian hospital in peace time.

ON THE ARAKAN FRONT in Burma, a Q.A.I.M.N.S. nurse sits in an ambulance ready to tend wounded soldiers waiting to be taken by air to a hospital in the rear. Air ambulances are saving many lives on this front.
Photo, Indian Official

Nurses on active service handling casualties in the forward area often have to put up with conditions which would appal a tough man. Consider the delicate operation of giving a blood transfusion. This operation is now performed under canvas or in any sort of available cover behind the front line—in leaky tents with floors slippery with wet mud, often with nurses in attendance who have not had their clothes off for a week, by nurses whose hours run to anything up to eighteen per day.

Such, very briefly, are circumstances in which our Service nurses are succouring our men to-day. How do they "take it"? Maybe the best answer is found in the casual remark of a nurse serving in Arakan, at a casualty clearing station close to the front line. She said, laughing: "We are the most forward women in Arakan!"

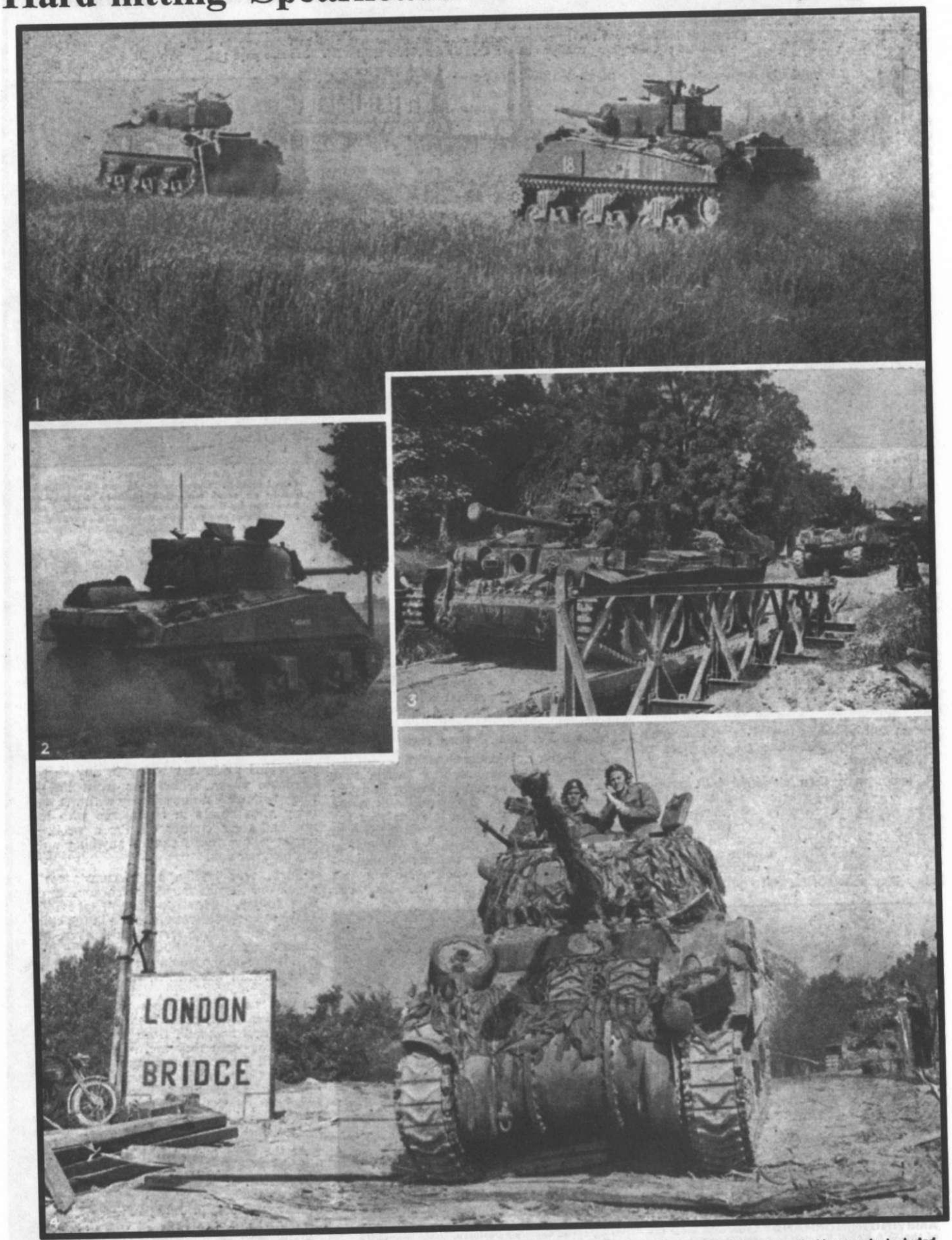
IF you enquire who these women are, the answer is they come from London, from Ireland and Scotland, from provincial cities and towns—that they are, in short, a cross section of the British nursing service and the inheritors of a tradition which goes back in direct line of descent to those crude, rough hospitals of the Crimea where Florence Nightingale laid the foundation of modern Service nursing.

At the head of Q.A.I.M.N.S. is Matron-in-Chief Mrs. L. J. Wilkinson, who had been Chief Principal Matron in India since 1942; she succeeded Dame Katherine Jones, as Matron-in-Chief, in July 1944.

Many who responded to the appeal for front line nurses are girls who had only just completed their hospital training and attained to the dignity of State Registration.

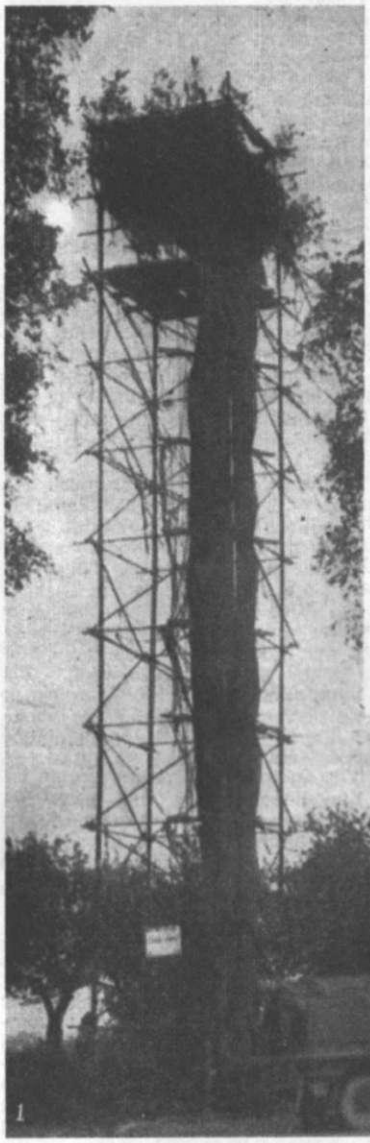
ARRIVING IN NORMANDY a few days after the Allies battered their way ashore, these members of the Q.A.I.M.N.S., clad in battle-dress, are being detailed for duty by their Senior Commandant Matron (extreme right). Their purpose was to set up at once on the beach-head a general hospital to house 600 patients; aided by R.A.M.C. and Pioneers, the task was accomplished in record time.
Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

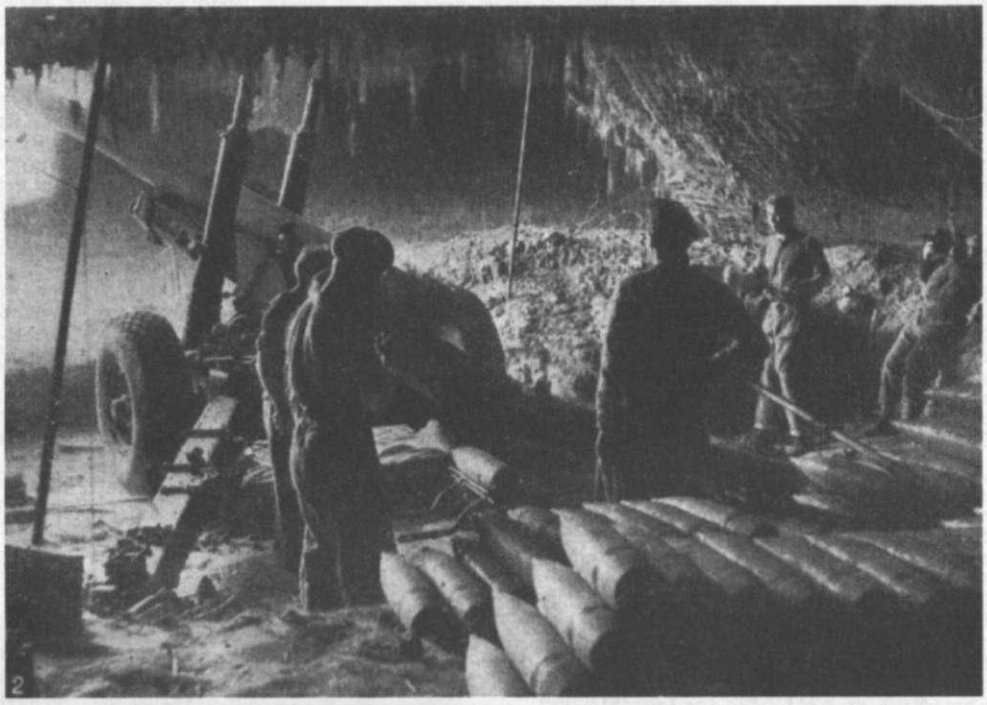
Hard-hitting Spearheads of Our 2nd Army Front



GREAT WEIGHT OF BRITISH ARMOUR, sweeping ahead of a combined British and Canadian advance east of the River Orne in Normandy, included American-built Sherman tanks (1) here seen moving up through standing crops. Improved Shermans, fitted with the British 17-pounder gun (2), joined in the thrust. A Cromwell followed by another Sherman crosses a bridge (3); one of the latest types of British cruiser tank, the Cromwell, incorporates a 75-mm. gun. Eastward across the Orne via "London Bridge" speeds yet another armoured column (4).

Roar of British Guns Rolls over Norman Plains





OBSERVATION TOWERS, skilfully located between tall trees and with their tops camouflaged to blend with the foliage, are used by our forces on the Western Front. This tower (1) was built for a flash-spotting unit of a Royal Artillery survey regiment ; the men who watch from the summit platforms note flashes from enemy gun positions and pass the information back, by field telephone, to our own batteries for accurate retaliatory action.

At dawn a gun of a 5.5 in. medium battery joins in a massed barrage ; shells are stacked ready for the non-stop pounding (2). So fierce was the firing that the barrels of this 25-pdr. battery had to be cooled at regular intervals with water (3). Each time this heavy 155 mm. gun was fired the shock raised clouds of choking dust (4) ; it is fitted with recoil absorbers, seen above the control part of the barrel

Photos, British Official, British Newspaper Pool

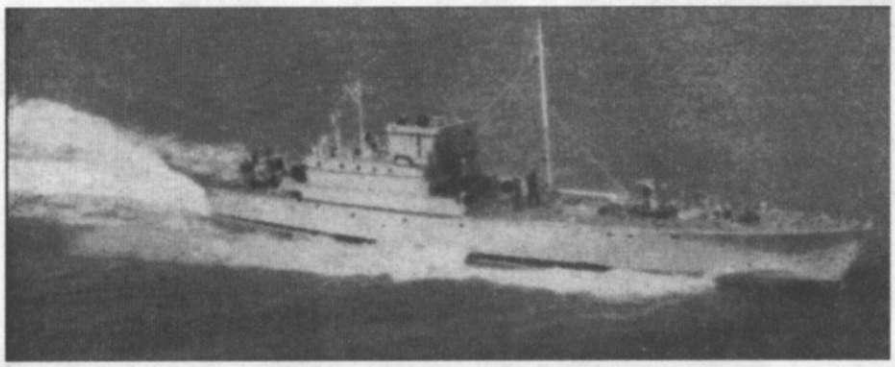
'Red Duster' Flies Again in Swedish Ports

Five small British Merchant Navy blockade-runners, audaciously defying Hitler's navy and the Luftwaffe, succeeded in establishing a regular service between Britain and neutral Sweden —after a break of 3½ years—returning with, among other war cargoes, vital ball-bearings. Facts about this daring enterprise are told here by Capt. FRANK H. SHAW. See also page 217.

TECHNICALLY, the Merchant Navy is a civilian, non-combatant force; since the day hostilities opened it has been in the front line of activity, braving the seas and every fiendishness that Hitler's ingenuity could devise. Its losses, in men and ships, have been colossal; but there is no record of any single ship failing to sail on schedule. Out of such unfaltering record it stands to reason that any occurrence deserving outstanding praise must be a remarkably fine feat indeed. Consider now the almost fantastic story of the little Red Ensign blockade-runners, which have defied the worst Hitler's navy and air force could do, to maintain a regular service between Britain and Sweden.

The picture of Francis Drake was hung in the cabin of each of the five gallant midget ships concerned. The names of this defiant quintet deserve to be honoured equally with the Golden Hind and the stoutest hearts-of-oak that ever took the sea with Good Queen Bess's august blessing. The Ellerman-Wilson Line, noteworthy through many years for trading in the harsh, hostile Baltic, were given the responsibility of operating the Gay Corsair, commanded by Capt. R. Tanton, O.B.E.; the Gay Viking, Capt. H. Whitfield, O.B.E.; the Hopewell, Capt. D. Stokes, O.B.E.; the Master Standfast, Capt. C. R. Holdsworth; and the Nonsuch, Capt. H. W. Jackson, O.B.E.

MOUTH OF THE SKAGER-RAK (see above) is heavily mined, yet gallant little vessels of the Merchant Navy—including the Gay Viking (below)—ran the German blockade to exchange war essentials with Sweden, as told in this page. *Photo, British Official*



This 20th-century task of singeing Hitler's moustache contained many factors that would have shaken even the stout soul of Drake, who never had to contend with mines, moored and magnetic, or with U-boats or hostile aircraft, E-boats, powerful destroyers, land-based torpedoes, and the multifarious ingenuities of the modern, war-minded scientists. This in no wise detracts from Sir Francis's gallantry; it only enhances that shown by the captains and crews of the Red Duster's little ships, which made a regular habit of defying the myriad dangers of the Skager-rak—a poisonous stretch of water at the best of times; which plied to and fro almost with the regularity of a peace-time mail-line, and conveyed to this country materials of which she stood sorely in need.

THE ships concerned were specially designed for this unique service of running the gauntlet through seas bristling with potential death. They had to be small, to allow of quick manoeuvring through mine-fields that were refreshed on every possible occasion by German mine-layers—surface, sub-surface and aerial. They had to be fast, because when liable to be chased they needed ability to dodge salvos of shell and straddles of bombs. But speed without volume promised to be of little value: express M.T.B.s could have run the gauntlet any day; but these sea-wasps are totally incapable of carrying considerable freights; consequently, the Drake Flotilla, as these ships might well be honoured in future references, had to be roomy and capacious, where every possible inch of space could be devoted to the snug stowage of cargoes. The fact of their unqualified success speaks volumes for the ingenuity of their designers and builders, as it glorifies the sterling, audacious courage of their youthful crews.

"Give us the tools," said the Prime Minister on a memorable occasion, "and we will finish the job." The little craft got their working tools, and the personnel performed such a job of work as deserves to live in history until the Red Ensign—otherwise the Red Duster—disappears for ever from the world's vast oceans. It was not that one solitary, breathless blockade-busting run was performed. Week by week, through the period of long nights, the shuttle service of unequalled value persisted. It was in the early part of last year—1943—that the operation was first conceived. The specially designed ships were built. Diesel engines were installed, as being capable of giving a high rate of speed without the sacrifice of too much engine-room and bunker-space. Since anything but defensively-armed merchant ships were liable to internment in the Swedish neutral ports to which the modern "mosquitoes" plied, only strictly defensive armament could be carried—deck-guns aft, Oerlikons and high-angle A.A. guns for defence—quite legitimate—against hostile assaults from the air. Thus the small flotilla did warships' work whilst lacking warships' aggressive armaments, and deserve all the more credit on that account.

The crews—each ship carried about 20 men—packed close, in order that valuable space might not be unduly encroached upon. The living conditions of these men approximated those of the crews of our submarines and light coastal craft: hot cooked food was a rarity, exercise a practical impossibility. And when the service was started, in the autumn of 1943, the North Sea and Skager-rak waters were about at their worst. As an old navigator of these waters, in fair weather and foul, I can only stand amazed at the consistent temerity with which the hundred-odd men concerned faced the fearful odds of their voluntary trade. They had to dare thick fogs, ever-altering minefields. The North Sea gales were continuous and tumultuous. Leading lights and landmarks were practically non-existent; the nights of that first bitter winter were long and dark—very, very dark.

IT was impossible to display so much as a glimmer of light even to guard them from collision with friendly or neutral craft. Each eastward voyage was so dexterously timed that the ships reached the Skager-rak, the area of greatest danger, as the darkness intensified. This called for expert navigation —navigation of hair's-breadth precision. The sun was valueless, and the main aids were compass and sounding-lead. The masters and crews were specially trained to *feel* a way across the North Sea's hidden bottom. But Hull men—who predominated in the crews—are notoriously skilful at such work; it is an inherited tradition with the stolid Yorkshiremen that the bitter sea washing their coast exists only to be beaten in fair fight—though the North Sea generally fights foully: getting its challengers down for the count and then hammering home its most savage blows.

And so, thrusting through noisy seas, blasted by screaming winds of almost incessant ferocity, liable to immediate sinking by enemy attacks from all dimensions, the persistent armada carried to Sweden commercial commodities required by that neutral country, and exchanged them for ball-bearings by wholesale—and ball-bearings mean as much to the machinery of modern war as does oil—and a multitude of other material without which our successful conduct of the war could not be guaranteed. Invaluable passengers were conveyed, too—that entailed even closer stowage of the human element aboard. Details of the cargoes borne both ways must necessarily be kept secret; but it is no exaggeration to say that but for the fidelity and toughness of these men and ships, the present invasion of Europe might well have been impossible.

SWEDEN welcomed the adventurers, rejoicing to see a resumption of trade with her old commercial friend. Although Germany did all in her power to interrupt the comings and goings of the little armada, Sweden sturdily held that she was entitled to conduct such trade. Our British die-hards were welcomed in Lysekil—the Swedish port selected for harbourage—with open arms. They were fêted, much to the disgust of the Germans; and the crews moved jauntily ashore among the very nationals whom they were defying day by day.

Not all the little ships escaped. The Master Standfast fell a prey to enemy activity. She was taken as good prize by the Germans; that she fought gallantly is proved by the fact that her captain died in the performance of his duty; Captain Holdsworth deserves a place in British sea-history comparable with any non-combatant merchant-adventurer whose deeds have helped to shed lustre on the British flag.

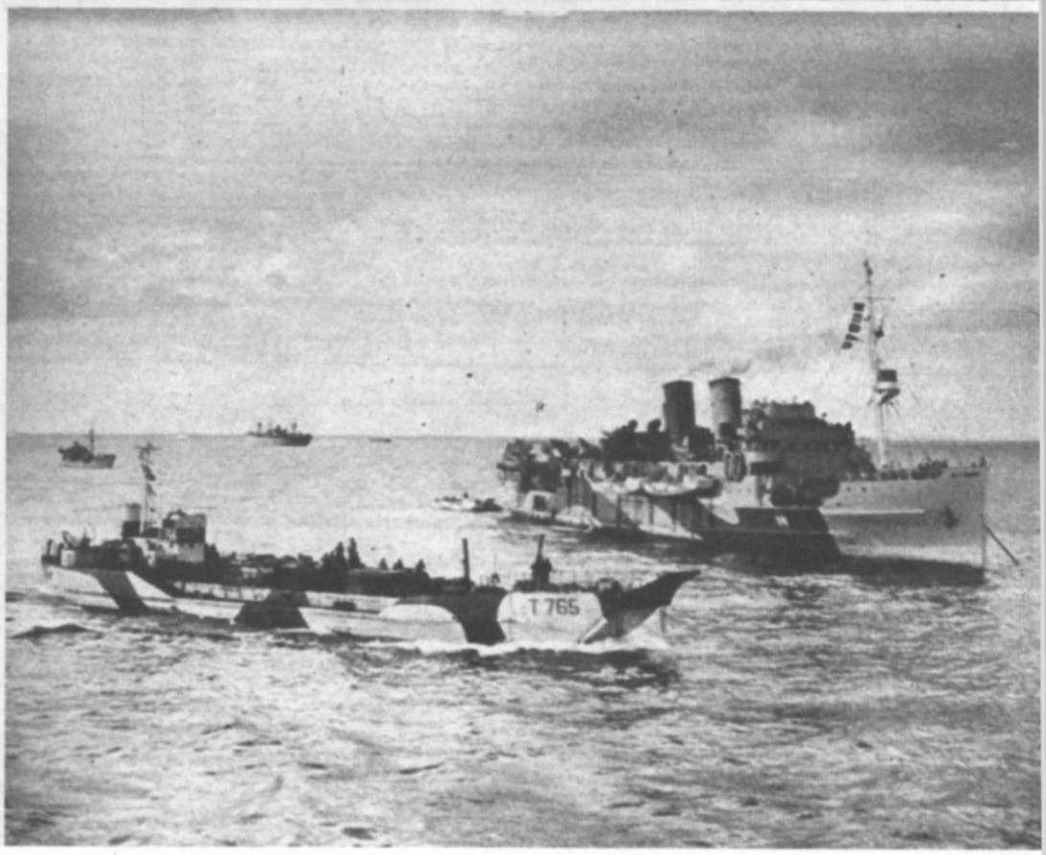
Naval Aid for Our Armies of Invasion

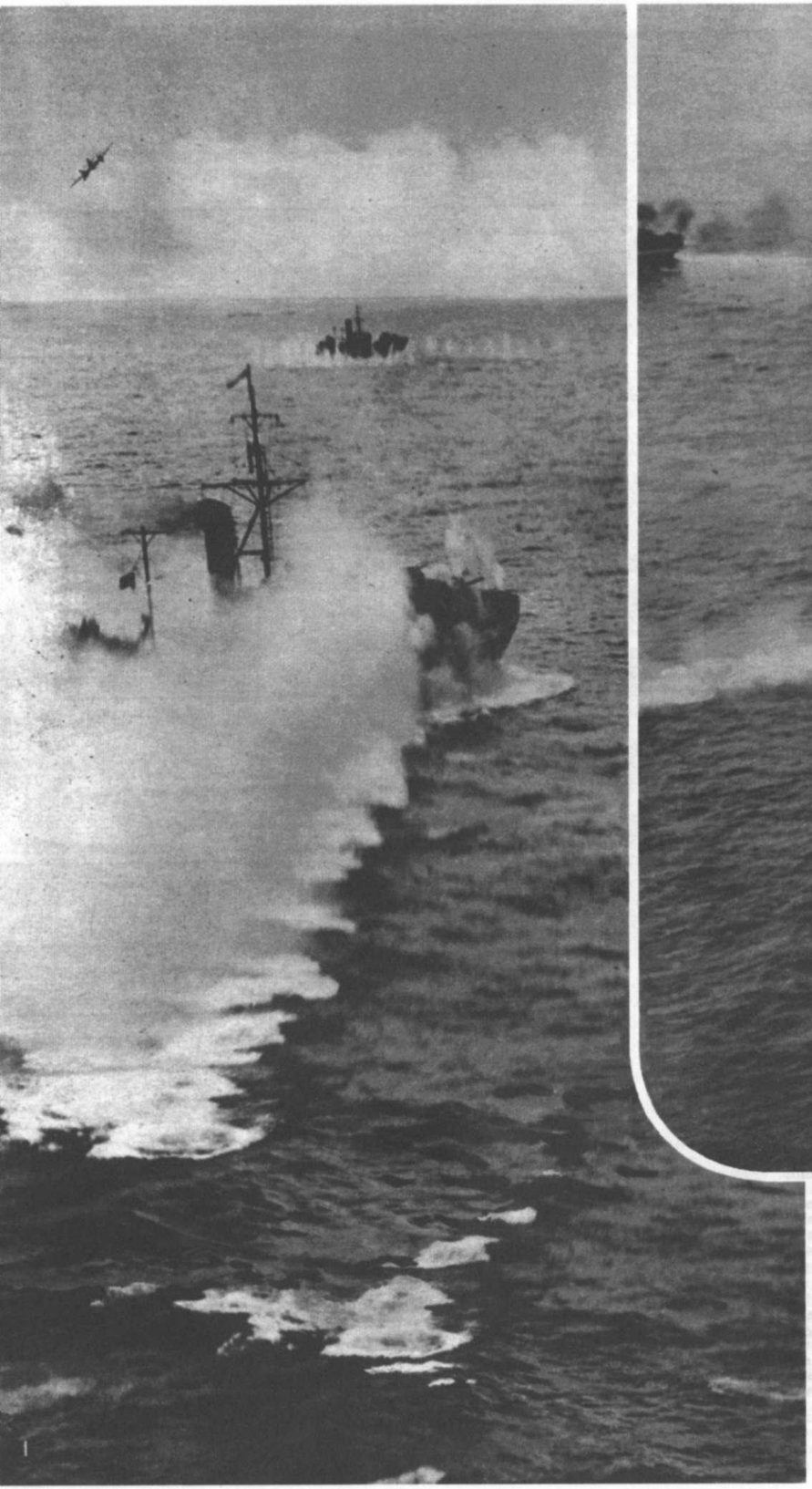
Through death-strewn, narrow waters and under shore-battery fire two great invasion armies were successfully carried to the Normandy coast and landed on open beaches with the combined protection of Allied sea and air forces and the help of the Merchant Navies of Britain and America.

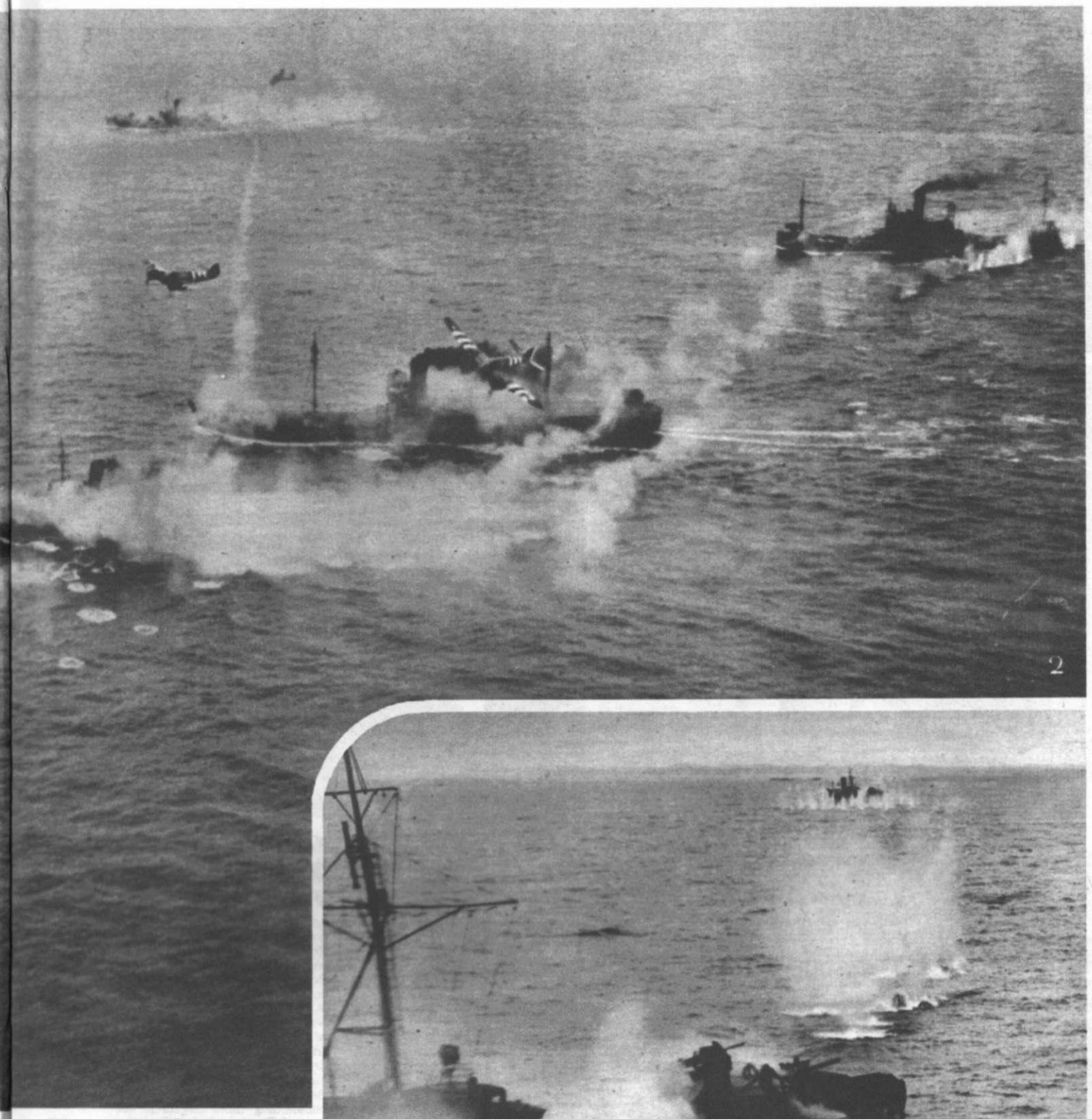
Since those June days, food and water, petrol and oil, ammunition, vehicles and spare parts, and great reinforcements have been transported without intermission—"Making it possible," in the words of General Sir Bernard Montgomery, C.-in-C. 21st Army Group, in a message of thanks to Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay, Allied Naval C.-in-C. Expeditionary Force, "for us to fight when you had put us ashore."

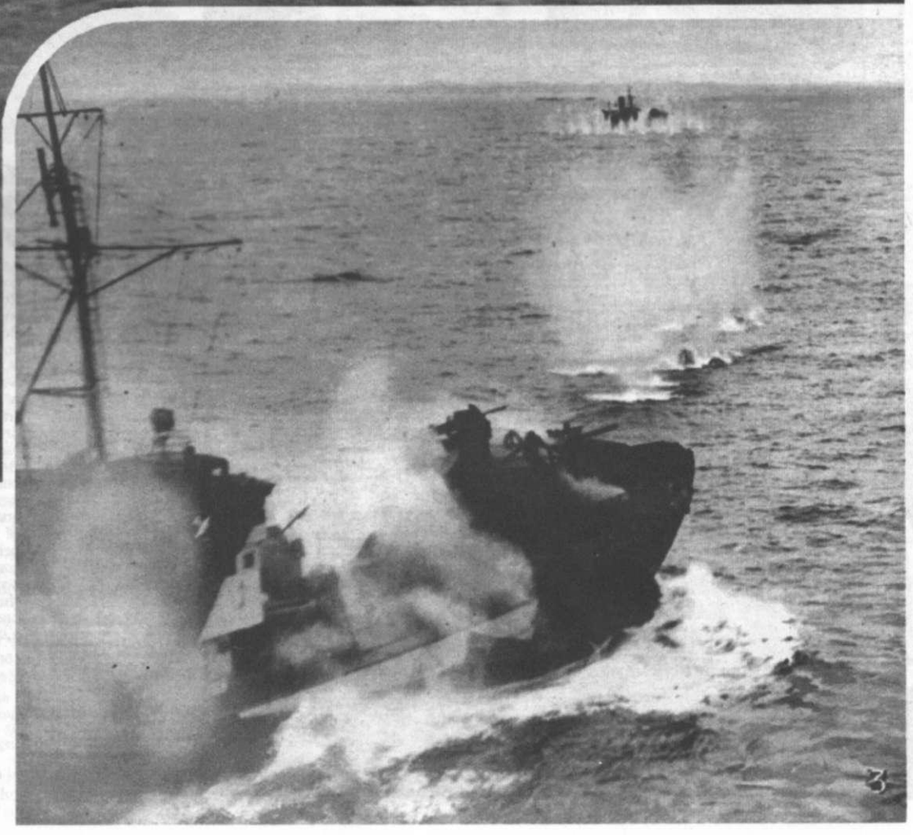
Above, on the deck of a British warship anchored off a beach-head, the crew of a Bofors A.A. gun covers shipping unloading supplies. Right, troop transports and landing craft approach the coast.

Photos, British Official; Pictorial Press





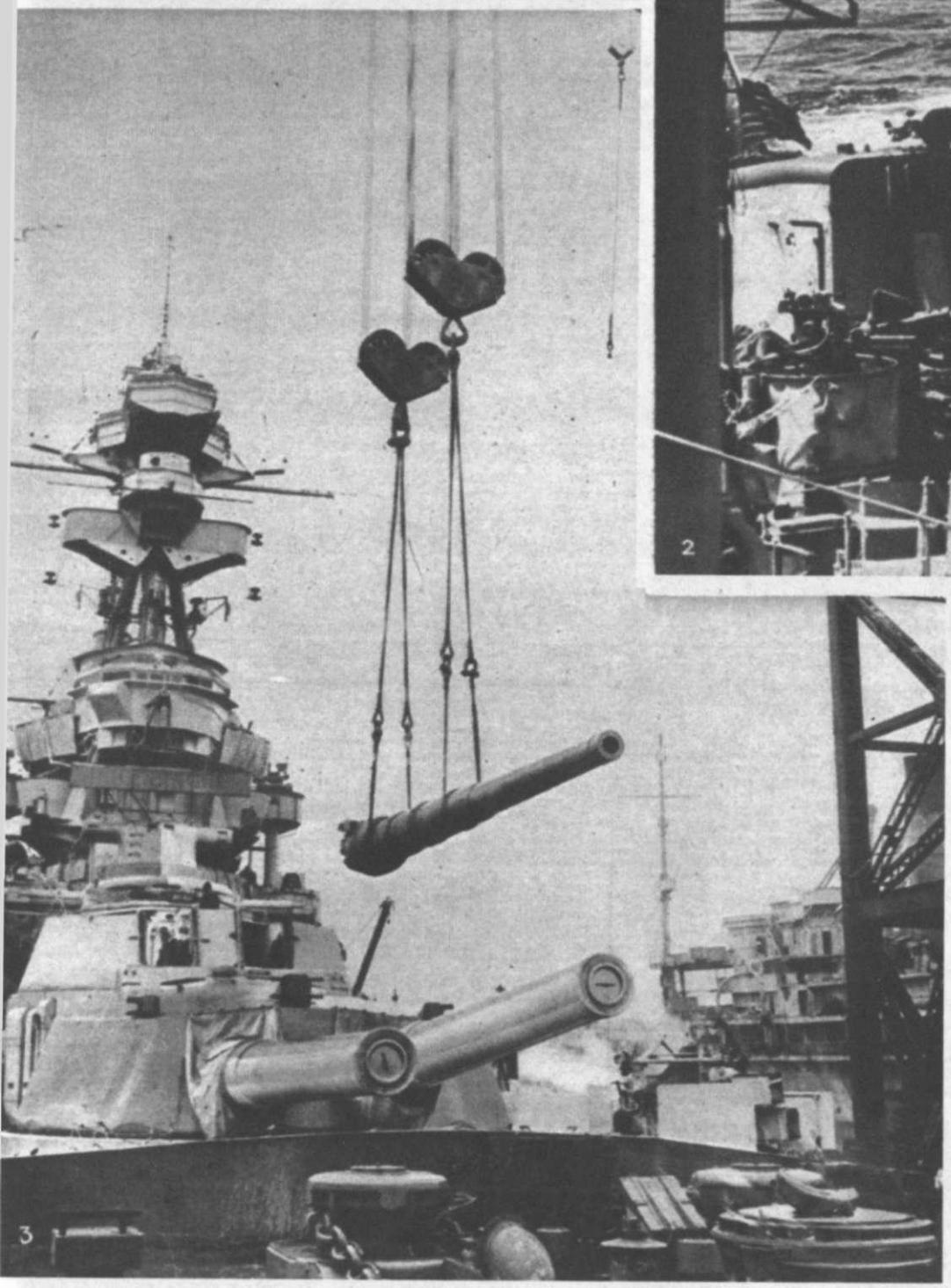




Beaufighters Blast Enemy Convoy

Supplementing the brilliant work of the Allied navies, supporting our armies in the Continental field, one of the largest "strike" forces R.A.F. Coastal Command has ever put in the air swooped down through cloud to mast-top height on July 15, 1944, and surprised, attacked and smashed an entire German convoy off the south coast of Norway. When the Beaufighters departed, unharmed, every one of the nine ships—carrying urgently needed war cargoes—was written off the Nazi roll. One blew up, one was last seen going down, the remainder were either on fire or crippled. An armed trawler (1, foreground) bursts into flame; in the background another is perilously ringed with near-misses. At the height of the attack (2), four of the Beaufighters are seen in devastating action. Enemy gunners abandon their positions (3) as this trawler begins to burn to water-level. R.A.F., Canadian, Australian and New Zealand squadrons of Coastal Command participated in this extremely successful operation.

2



3

Guns of Navy Take Part in Land Battles

As they bombard enemy strong-points ashore gun crews of the Royal Navy rely for correct ranges on men of Forward Observation Bombardment units, among whom are many naval telegraphists from H.M. ships; here spotting for the Navy's guns are (1) an infantry officer and a sergeant and, in the trench, a naval rating in battle-dress. From the bridge of a U.S. escorting destroyer (2, left) the British cruiser H.M.S. Dido is seen bombarding shore targets to the west of Gaeta, in Italy. Changing guns on the upper forward turret of H.M.S. Ramillies (3), which helped considerably to break up concentrations of enemy armour around Caen in Normandy; in the first ten days of the invasion operations Ramillies hurled nearly 1,000 tons of shells on German defence positions.

Photos, British Official

VIEWS & REVIEWS

Of Vital War Books

by Hamilton Fyfe

I HAVE been reading what its author calls "an angry book." He offers no apology for it. He makes the same answer that the prophet in the Bible made to Jehovah when he was asked "Doest thou well to be angry?" His answer was "I do well."

Mr. George Soloveytchik claims that he has every right to feel anger against "successive British governments which have refused to govern," and as a result of that refusal "have sent hundreds of thousands of heroic young men to slaughter or enemy prison camps." He extends his indignation to "the Allies who declared war on Germany without bothering to wage it" and were so "blind, cowardly and inefficient" that they inflicted "on millions of men and women all over the world the horrors of invasion, terrorism and slow death."

He expands this indictment as follows: The Allies, "having exhausted their efforts to evade war at almost any price, having surrendered one vital bastion in Europe after another, and refused to fight for Czechoslovakia," declared war, but did not wage it.

> They each proceeded to attend to their own affairs, while carefully refraining from attacking Germany in the west—the only effective help they could have given the Poles.

Britain, it is suggested, was even more to blame than the French for the "phoney war."

> After eight months there were still many hundreds of unemployed as well as many hundreds of thousands of young men duly registered for military service still waiting to be given anything to do.

The war did not begin for us, Mr. Soloveytchik says, until Hitler invaded Scandinavia (April, 1940).

> It took the tragedies of a defeat in Norway, the invasion of the Low Countries and a ghastly break-through to the Channel ports before a change of government became possible, and with it a much speedier adaptation of the nation to the life-and-death struggle in which it had become engaged.

This did not save us, however, from the consequences of allowing the British Empire to become "the greatest collection of unprotected loot in the world."

This is the heavy indictment Mr. Soloveytchik brings against the rulers of his adopted country during the past twenty-five years or so. He does not bring it for the sake of raking up old muddles and blunders and crimes. His book, Peace or Chaos? (Macdonald, 10/6) is designed to show how Britain shook herself free of Baldwinism and Chamberlainism, stood alone against fearful odds for a year, and has since redeemed the reputation of our race for obstinate, unbeatable opposition to tyranny. It is a plea for British leadership of the most vigorous and enlightened kind after the war.

Mr. Soloveytchik was born in Russia. He came to this country 25 years ago and took up British citizenship. He can therefore speak of himself as "one of us," yet at the same time he can look at our history with detachment and our problems with the perspicacity of a looker-on who has seen more of the game than the players who were engaged in it. At times he shows that he has not quite assimilated the British point of view. For example, he says on page 212:

> Our case is the greatest case there ever was. A cynic might say that in being forced to take up arms we had greatness thrust upon us, while the idealist would argue that we are fighting to protect freedom and democracy. There is a modicum of truth in both these views.

On Page 215 he accuses those who claim that Britain is fighting "solely for the common good" of "cant, sanctimoniousness and defeatism," and states roundly that "every single one of the United Nations is at war because it has been constrained by direct or indirect attack to fight for survival."

I do not remember hearing anyone claim that we were altogether disinterested when we decided to intervene in the affairs of Europe and to defend Poland and Rumania against the Nazi menace. That isn't the sort of thing Britons are in the habit of saying. Nor do I think it could be successfully argued that we intervened because we were directly threatened. Hitler, in fact, wanted to come to an agreement with us and it is on record that Mr. Chamberlain's "dearest wish" was to reach such agreement. In the hope of doing so he abandoned the Czechs. Only when it appeared that other nations one after the other would have to be abandoned did he bow before the rush of public feeling and warn Hitler that he must reckon with us if he tried to treat others as he had treated the Czechs. It was, therefore, for the sake of weaker peoples that we declared our readiness to take up arms, and in writing that I cannot feel guilty of defeatism, sanctimoniousness or cant.

War's Aftermath: Peace or Chaos?

NOR does it seem fair to blame "our paranoiacs" for wanting to group together various small nations for purposes of defence, or "our Press" for saying that the small States were really responsible for the war, that their squabbles and economic nationalism were at the root of the crisis, that they remained neutral far too long, and could not defend themselves when invaded. Such a line has not been taken by any section of the British Press that carries much weight. That Holland and Belgium did make things more difficult for us at the beginning of the war is undeniable. The insensate belief of their rulers in the possibility of remaining outside the struggle was a positive hindrance to us. But we have not reproached them, we have on the contrary treated them as if from the first they had been at one with us.

HITLER PLASTERED, as to the back of his left hand, after the bomb attempt on his life reported on July 20, 1944. He is seen here at his Berlin headquarters with Goering, who arrived shortly after the incident, which was generally regarded as the first real crack in the German structure. On the left is Admiral Doenitz. PAGE 211 · *Photo, News Chronicle*

However, it is the future more than the past that matters most. Let us see what Mr. Soloveytchik proposes British leadership should aim at. Chiefly, of course, the prevention of a Third World War, for which Germany's military leaders are believed to be making plans already. But here he creates for himself a difficulty. He believes that "in every State there exists an inherent tendency to expansion."

> Indeed, I believe that it would be quite as legitimate to talk of the State's "instinct of expansion" as it is to talk of the individual's instinct of reproduction.

If that is so, then how can we hope to check the German tendency to expand? In the face of so imperious an instinct, what is the use of setting up obstacles that nationalism will sweep away?

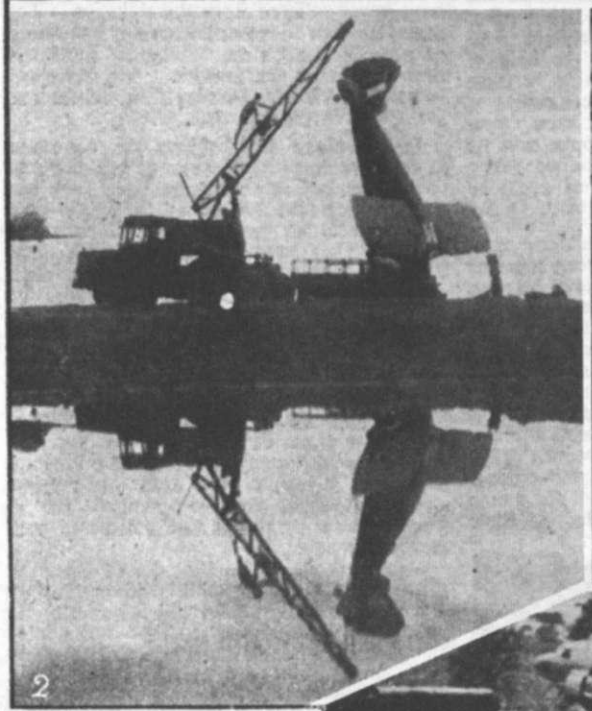
The truth seems to me to lie in another direction. What Mr. Soloveytchik calls an instinct I should call a delusion, created and fostered by politicians, journalists, philosophers, and other people who have nothing better to do than increase their importance by appearing as "national leaders" and making their nations believe they can make themselves happier and richer by dominating and oppressing other nations. The Swiss have never suffered from this delusion. The Scandinavians have not shown any symptoms of possessing such an "instinct" since the time of Charles the Twelfth. And those are nations which Mr. Soloveytchik singles out for special commendation.

In his plans for keeping the Germans in order he drops his theory and gets down to facts. Instinct or no instinct, they have got to be shown that the rest of the world does not mean to let them disturb its peace any longer. They have been disturbing it since 1859, when Bismarck was the arch-deluder, noisily supported by politicians, professors and pen-men. Hitler is merely a caricature of Bismarck. The policy, the ambitions, have been the same ever since then. The rest of the world could have stopped that policy, could have snuffed out that ambition, if it had enjoyed clear vision instead of seeing through a glass darkly. Now the job has to be done thoroughly, and it is more difficult now than it would have been thirty years ago, when Page, American Ambassador in London, was astonished that it had not been tackled already.

ONE of Mr. Soloveytchik's ideas clashes with what Mr. Churchill has said more than once with emphasis. This is the idea that Germany should be forcibly divided up into small States. It must be dismissed, therefore, as outside the range of possibility. With the suggestion that we should do what the Germans have long and falsely accused us of doing—encircle the Reich—there will be widespread sympathy. The author wisely pours scorn on the notion that it should be "invaded by an army of no doubt well-meaning English-speaking schoolmarms, tutors, padres, quakers, Y.M.C.A. workers, missionaries, and other vegetarians," who would "re-educate" the Germans.

But there ought to be, he says, strict frontier supervision, so that the immense imports of iron, copper, bauxite, fats, oil, petrol, and a whole series of other raw materials essential to rearmament, which were allowed to flow in between 1933 when Hitler secured power and 1939 when he made war, shall be made impossible. That will be generally approved also. But not everybody will agree with the writer and Dr. Goebbels, from whom he quotes the sentiment, that in making peace it is power and not morality that counts. Is not that the very sentiment we are fighting against?

The Japanese are being Driven out of Manipur



AFTER CLEARING THE ENEMY from the 45 miles long Imphal-Kohima road on the Burma-Manipur front, which they achieved by June 25, 1944, British and Indian troops despite monsoon weather pressed on against the Japanese in that region.

Behind tanks, British and Gurkhas move up (1); tumbled hills in the background indicate the difficult terrain with which they have to cope. The monsoon wind, sweeping over a flooded R.A.F. airfield, picked up this plane and turned it over; ground staff and a mobile crane undertook to set it right again (2). In dense elephant grass Japanese snipers lie hidden; covered by a Bren gun British troops stalk them (3). Awaiting their turn to go into action are these Gurkhas (4); behind are transport planes which will take them and supplies to the fighting line.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Indian Official.

How Freed France Kept Bastille Day in 1944

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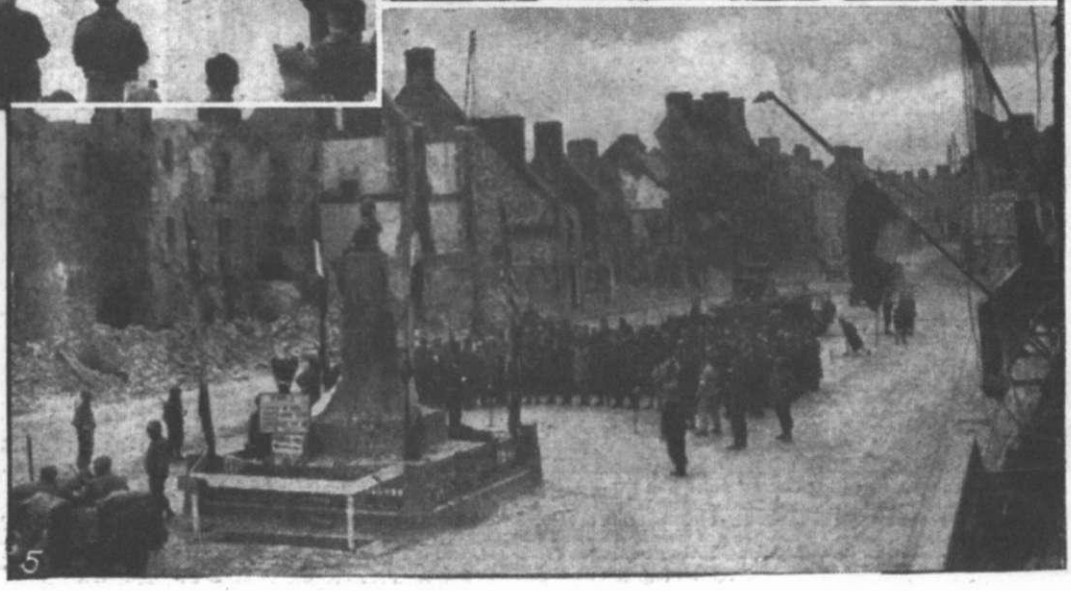
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ANNIVERSARY of the Fall of the Bastille which, 155 years ago, heralded the death of a former tyranny and birth of a new France, was celebrated in appropriate manner on July 14, 1944, in French towns and villages liberated by the Allies.

In Bayeux, cleared of the Germans on June 6, Allied troops and civilians paraded before the 1914-18 war memorial (1). At Courseulles, one of the first villages to be freed, a French child placed a wreath on the grave of a British soldier who fell in the early hours of D-Day (2). A military band grouped before the flag-draped war memorial at St. Ouen de Rots (3). U.S. soldiers danced with the French in Cherbourg (4). With simple ceremony the great anniversary was marked amidst the ruins of La Haye du Puits (5).

Catapults give R.A.F. Pilots a Flying Start

Ships that carry an aeroplane as part of their normal equipment haven't the deck space to provide a runway for the plane to take off under its own power. The answer to that conundrum is the catapult device which launches plane and pilot into the air at 55 miles an hour from the stationary position. HARRIMAN DICKSON has visited a training school for these pilots.

THE day I crossed the ferry to visit the R.A.F. station where they train catapult pilots, there was a choppy sea and a sharp wind blowing. Ships of all kinds lay at anchor, slatternly tugs, broad merchant ships and a sprinkling of warships. One at least among them had a strange-looking apparatus fitted across her decks. I was destined to see a larger version of this device in operation.

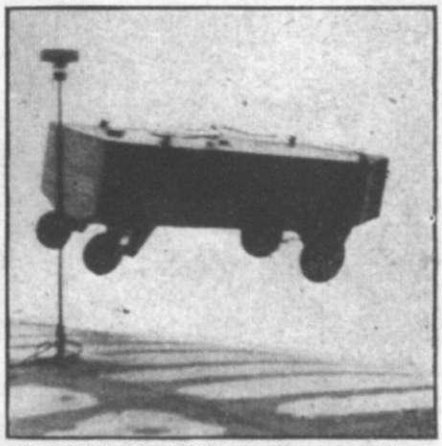
I approached it via a tunnel, part of an old fort which, centuries ago, had protected this part of Britain from invasion. I came out of the tunnel, and there was the giant trellis-work of steel lying across its concrete base like the huge skeleton of some pre-historic monster. This is the device which three years ago put a spoke in the U-boat's wheel and made the attacks of German long-range bombers a very hazardous business. In those days the battle of the seas was the most vital battle of all, and ships far out in the Atlantic had no protection against prowling German bombers capable of flying long distances without refuelling. Then catapults were fitted to hundreds of ships. R.A.F. pilots became part of the crew, and high-speed fighters were punched into the air from a small deck space whenever an attack threatened. Many of the pilots who volunteered for this dangerous work were trained at the catapult centre I visited. I watched the whole process while I was there.

Despite its weight and proportions, the catapult was so perfectly balanced on its spindle that it could be swung into the wind by one or two men without any great effort. The whole thing was not unlike an enlarged and carefully corrected version of the schoolboy's catapult. I watched a plane trundle towards the giant crane standing beside the catapult. The pilot remained in the plane while the grapples of the crane were fitted into position and plane and pilot were hoisted into the air, swung gently across, and dropped down on to the superstructure of the catapult, a framework of steel legs designed to carry the weight of the plane and distribute it evenly. Below the framework of legs, and within the main steel trellis, were three massive rams, which gave the plane its drive, each ram taking up the impulse from the last and finally conveying it to the plane. The latest catapults used on our merchant ships work upon a similar principle.

THE Direction Officer of the training school waited until the plane was in position, then walked over to examine the catapulting charge, something like a seven-pounder shell, but filled with cordite instead of high explosive. A nod from him and the armourer inserted the charge into the breech just as though he were loading a gun.

Above their heads, the pilot glanced over his controls and then waved his arm to the Direction Officer. Already various flags had conveyed a variety of signals to and from the catapult crew, and all was ready for the firing of the shell. It is a tense moment for a pilot about to make his first trial catapult take-off. He doesn't quite know what to expect.

The arm of the D.O. fell, the armourer pulled a wire lanyard. But there was no deafening explosion. Instead, the metal rams suddenly leapt to life, the whole framework of legs shot forward and at a certain point automatically collapsed, leaving the plane in the air. It had been whisked from a standstill to 55 miles an hour, and another first-time flight from the catapult apparatus was successfully completed.

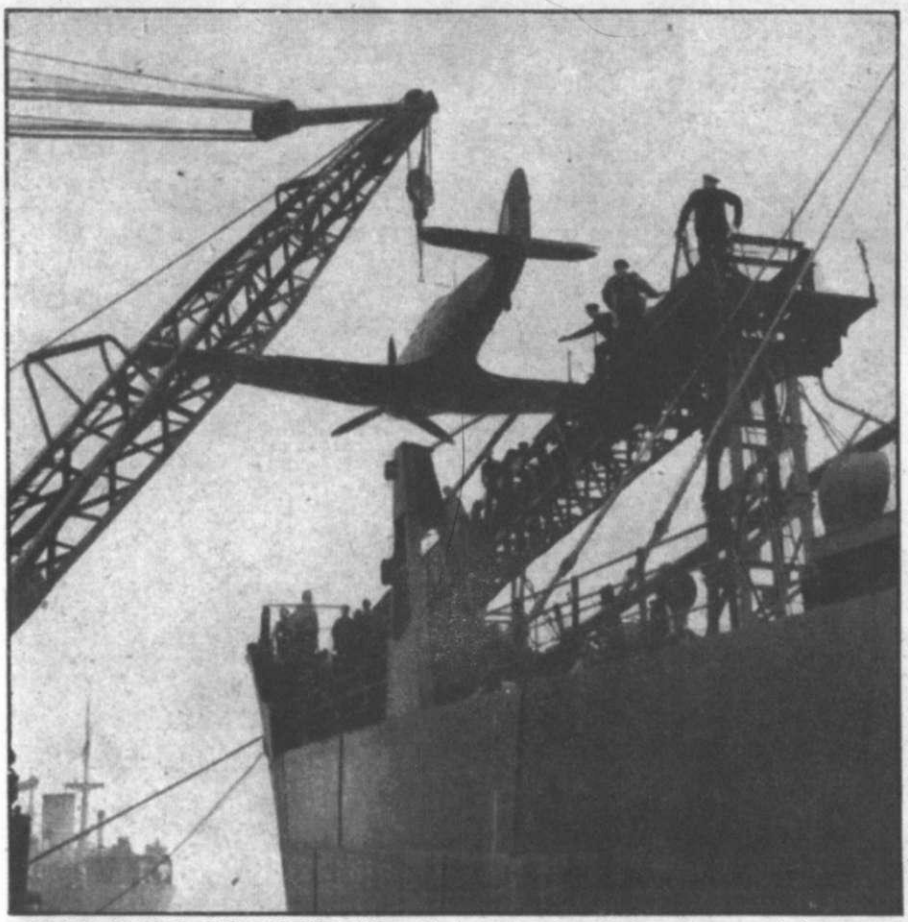


"FLYING FLOSSIE" is the name given to this boat-shaped, water-filled steel tank on wheels used in testing plane catapults as explained in this page. Here it is "in flight," doing 70 miles per hour.
Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

THE trial process does not end at this school. To make the catapults foolproof, the Fleet Air Arm uses an interesting device nicknamed "Flying Flossie." It consists of a boat-shaped steel tank on wheels, without motor, wings or propeller. The tank is filled with water until it equals the weight of the type of plane about to be flown, and then it is fitted to the catapult and flung into the air. It travels at a speed of about seventy miles an hour, and after a short flight crashes into the sea, where it is later recovered by a tug.

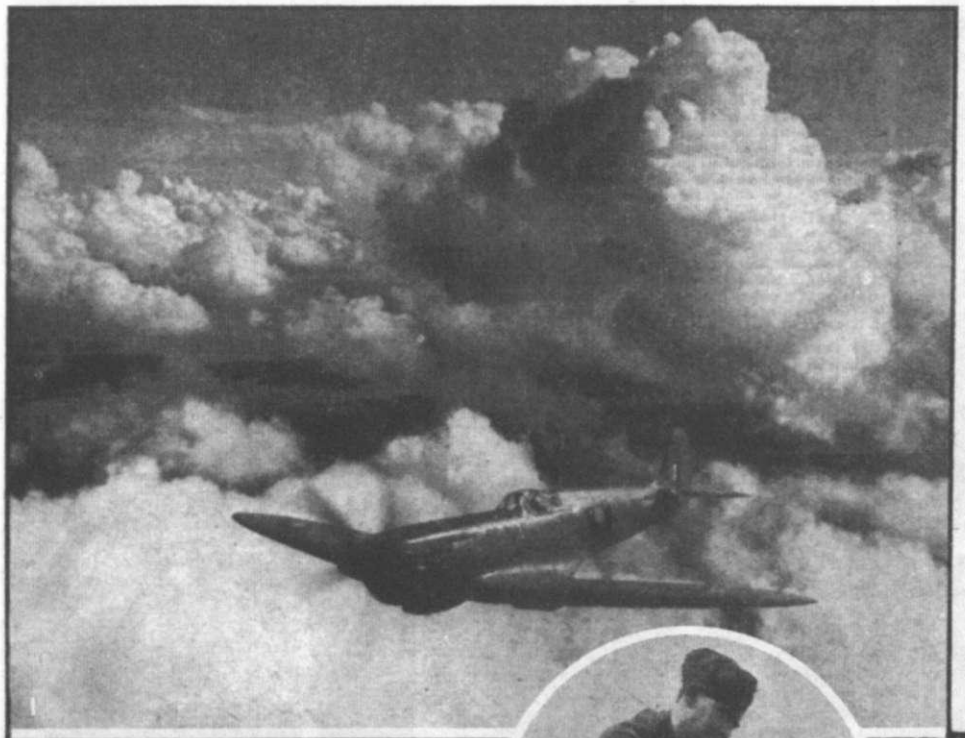
With the pilots trained and the "operations" catapult proven, serious work begins. On board a variety of ships the catapult pilots have already played a vital part in defeating attacks on our convoys, spotting for battleships, and reconnoitring enemy positions. The life of the catapult pilot is distinctly more hazardous than that of the normal Fleet Air Arm pilot, because he has no aircraft carrier's deck waiting his return. In the case of merchant ships, the pilot, once he has taken off and dealt with any attacker, has the choice of these alternatives: he can make for the nearest land, or he can risk a landing in the sea and there wait for his ship to pick him up.

ON one occasion, miles off Iceland, a pilot was catapulted from the deck of his ship to tackle an approaching bomber. Cloud and poor visibility made his job difficult, but once the bomber sighted him it beat a hasty retreat. Then the pilot turned to find his own ship again, and there was just a grey waste of water with no sign of mast or rigging, and not even a puff of smoke. He knew his position in relation to Iceland, and from his petrol gauge estimated that he might just make it. He set his course accordingly, and finally crash-landed with an empty petrol tank. From there he returned to England by flying boat, and within a very short time was on the high seas again, had warning of an approaching bomber, and was catapulted away once more. This time he shot the bomber into the sea.



GOING ABOARD THE PARENT SHIP and being replaced on the launching catapult by means of a dock crane is this Hurricane fighter, after alighting on the sea. The idea of catapulting aircraft from merchant ships was suggested by Mr. Churchill in 1941, although the Navy had used the method in warships long before. Cata-fighters belong to the M.S.F.U. (Merchant Ship Fighter Unit); vessels are known as C.A.M. ships—Catapult Aircraft Merchantmen.

Spitfire Cameras in Action High Over Normandy



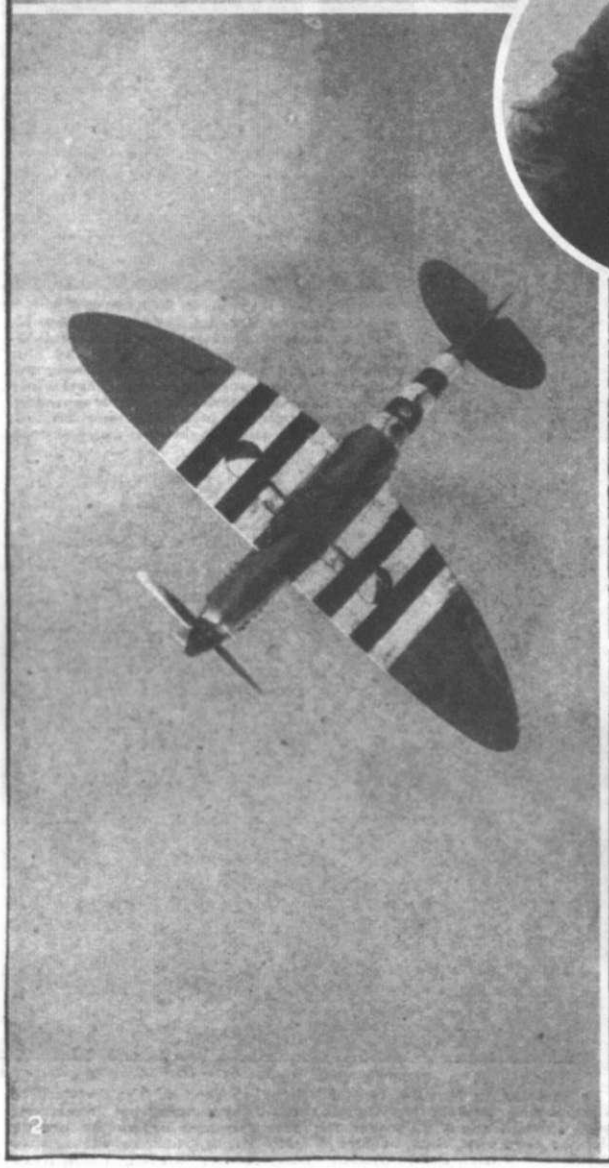
PHOTOGRAPHIC RECONNAISSANCE is the speciality of one of the newest members of the famous fighting Spitfire family—the long-range Mark XI ; there are three versions, powered respectively by the Rolls-Royce Merlin 61, 63, and 63a engine, which gives a maximum output of more than 1,650 h.p. Providing for great range, extra fuel tanks, additional to the two main tanks in the fuselage, are fitted in the leading edges of the wings—in the space usually occupied by guns. The plane has a span of 36 ft. 10 ins. and is just over 36 ft. long.

Men who fly these Spitfires belong to the R.A.F. Photographic Reconnaissance Unit, which had its origin in a special flight formed in October 1939 from remnants of a peace-time survey unit. First Spitfire was used for reconnaissance in April 1940, when Kiel was photographed.

A Spitfire Mark XI above the clouds, about to dive down to take its pictures (1). Into its dive (2), its terrific speed (to date undisclosed) carries it through "enemy action." A fitter mounts the camera (3) which, electrically operated, can take 500 pictures, photographed horizontally or obliquely. After a flight, pilots are interrogated (4). Leaning on the wing of a plane P.R.U. men examine their pictures (5).

Photo "recce" pilots helped the planners of our invasion of Europe by producing minute-detail photographs of the territory over which the Allies would fight. Not an inch of a 3,000-mile coastline was neglected, and from nearly half a million photographs experts pieced together the mosaic.

Photos, British Official, Chas. E. Brown, Fox

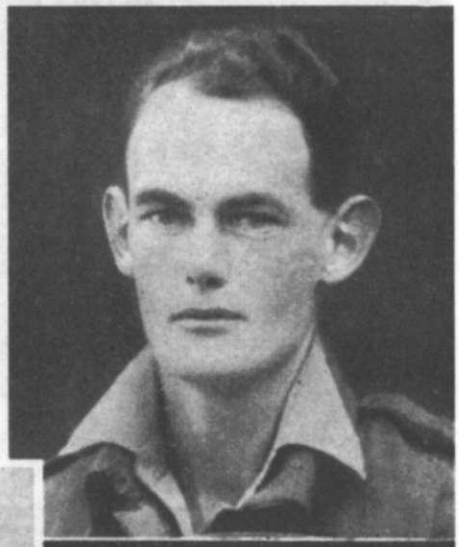


New Awards Raise this War's V.C. Roll to 93

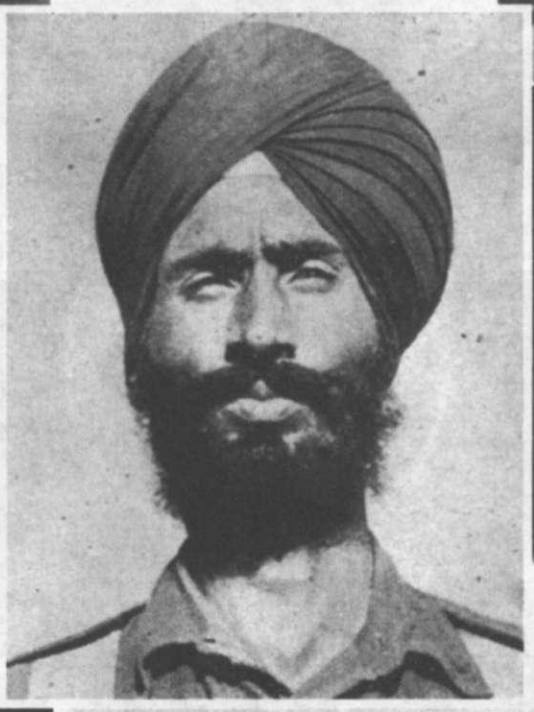
Temp. Lt.-Col. H. R. B. FOOTE, D.S.O.
Of the Royal Tank Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps, Lt.-Col. Foote (left) gained the Victoria Cross in Libya during the period May 27 to June 15, 1942. In one action, his own tank knocked out, he changed to another and, although wounded, continued to lead his battalion. The second tank disabled, he continued on foot under intense fire. By his brilliant leadership he defeated a German attempt to encircle two British divisions.

Major C. F. HOEY, M.C.
On Feb. 16, 1944, in the Ngakyedauk Pass in Arakan, Burma, Major Hoey (right) of the Lincolnshire Regt., badly wounded, rushed an enemy strong post, killing the occupants before he himself fell. He was awarded the V.C.

Actg. Naik NAND SINGH
Of the 11th Sikh Regt., Indian Army, Naik Singh (below) won the V.C. in Burma on March 12, 1944. Crawling up a steep, knife-edged ridge under heavy fire, with the bayonet alone, and wounded, he took three Japanese trenches single-handed, killing seven of the enemy.



Pilot Officer C. J. BARTON, R.A.F.V.R.
Posthumously awarded the V.C. for conspicuous bravery in a raid on Nuremberg on March 30, 1944, Pilot Officer Barton (above) took his crippled Halifax to the appointed target. On the return journey, with only one engine working, he crashed in attempting to avoid houses in England.



Temp. Captain R. WAKEFORD
In the Cassino fighting in Italy, on May 13, 1944, Capt. Wakeford (above) of the Hampshire Regt., accompanied only by his orderly, killed a number of the enemy and took 20 prisoners. Later, seriously wounded, he consolidated another position. For selfless devotion to duty he won the V.C.

Major J. K. MAHONY
Of the Westminster Regt. (Motor), Canadian Army, Major Mahony (above) during the establishment of a vital bridge-head across a river in Italy, and in the face of determined enemy attack, on May 24, 1944, showed great courage, exposing himself wherever danger threatened until all enemy attempts to destroy the bridge-head had failed. This action gained him the V.C.

Fusilier F. A. JEFFERSON
In an attack on the Gustav Line in Italy on May 16, 1944, Fusilier Jefferson of the Lancashire Fusiliers (above) destroyed with a Piat Projector a German tank threatening an important position. His action, for which he won the V.C., saved his company and broke the enemy counter-attack.

Photos, British Official, "Daily Mirror," G.P.U., Planet News

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

How We Ran the Blockade in the Gay Corsair

Captain Robert Tanton, O.B.E., Merchant Navy skipper, has told to a News Chronicle reporter the part his little ship the Gay Corsair has played in bringing to Britain tons of invaluable war materials available only in Sweden —sailing defiantly from an East Coast port, past German planes and E-boats and over minefields into a blockaded Swedish harbour. **See also p. 206.**

MORE exciting than the Malta convoy run, in a way, this blockade running. I was a first officer then with Ellerman's Wilson Line. I was sent for and asked if I would like to volunteer for a special job. I volunteered. Next morning I had been promoted to captain, and five of us met in a private room in the owners' office. There we were briefed. They told us we had to get through to Sweden. Our route ran straight across the thickest minefields.

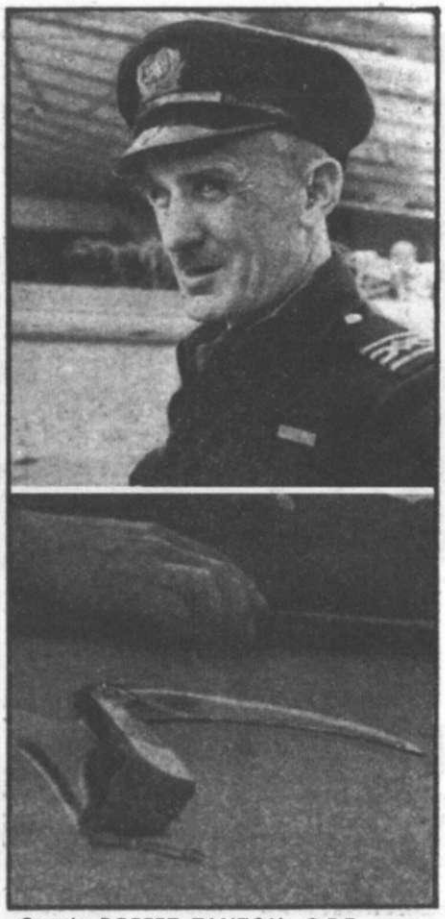
We slipped out of the Humber in convoy. A few hours later we had engine trouble, and when the trip really began we were all alone in the North Sea. The Gay Corsair was only 125 ft. long. There was no comfort aboard, and we all knew that we should be on constant alert all the way across.

We flew our Red Ensign all the time and the pictures of Drake and Mr. Churchill we had aboard gave us a feeling of adventure. The boys were ready for the whole German shooting match. It was daylight when we left England, and nearing dusk when we reached the Skager-rak. Then we crowded on all our speed—and it was plenty. We just shot through the sea.

There were plenty of floating mines in front of us, but the look-outs gave up watching them after a bit. Our bow wave was pushing ahead of us, and we simply drove at full speed right through the mines. The wash we threw up carried them past our bows.

The Skager-rak was the worst part of the voyage. A German patrol plane spotted us and our gunners went into action with their Oerlikons. The German turned away and disappeared. It was very cold and very wet, and we were weary. Our look-outs spotted German patrol ships and the Germans saw us, but the engineers poured on everything, and we slipped by the E-boats without action.

We were pleased with ourselves, of course. As we entered the little Swedish harbour there was the German consul standing on the pier. He was glaring at us, but my boys weren't worried. I must say that they were not very polite. They greeted the consul with—well, like British sailors greeting a German consul —you can imagine!



Captain ROBERT TANTON, O.B.E., commander of the Gay Corsair (story on the left). Scorning the difficulties of the enterprise he declared, "If one can get through, two can!" —a neat "play" on the ship's badge, a toucan (bottom). *Photos, News Chronicle*

I Dodged the Germans for Five Weeks in Caen

A Lancaster bomber pilot from London, Squadron Leader E. Sprawson, D.F.C., wearing patched blue overalls and a dirty scarf, told a Reuter correspondent of his adventurous introduction to the old Norman city and of his five weeks' sojourn there with friendly French civilians before British troops arrived and threw the Germans out.

I WAS shot down by a fighter over Caen on D-Day. Five of us baled out—I don't know if the two gunners made it or not. French civilians who had just got out of the centre of Caen to avoid bombing happened to be in the field where I landed. They had me out of uniform into these clothes within 20 minutes of my landing. They are very brave people with plenty of guts and determination. They had realised what would happen if I was caught —I would be taken prisoner and they would be shot for hiding me. We went back into their house in the town and they treated me as a member of the family.

I had no rations, so they insisted on sharing theirs with me. We were lucky and lived on the produce from a little allotment, the milk from a couple of cows and the very limited rations distributed daily to the townspeople. I got two square meals a day. My chief worry was to know what to do. Allied broadcasts advised us to evacuate the town, but I could see myself trickling into Switzerland by about 1946 and decided to stay where I was in the hope that our troops would arrive before long.

Another idea was to move into open country out of the way of concentrated bombing and shelling. But being British and individual, I thought I would have much more trouble concealing my identity. There was only one really bad bombing. I was right in the middle of it. I walked through Caen twice when it was full of Germans.

Though I speak French and could make myself understood I could never have passed myself as a Frenchman. Last night when we were in the cellar of the house in Rue de Moulin, jutting on to the main thoroughfare of Boulevard Des Allies, a great deal of scuttling about by the Germans took place. They had lots of armed patrols slinking along the streets while the crowd jostled south.

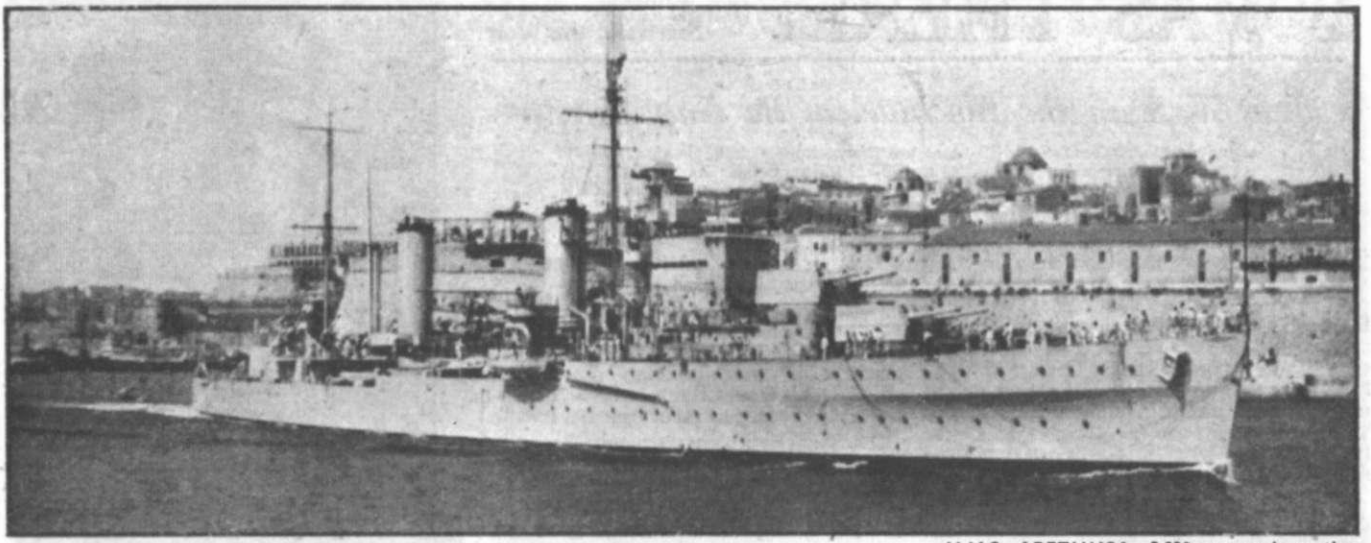
For the last fortnight civilians in Caen have been living for this day. We heard you were two miles away, and then one mile But there was still no sign ur til this morning. A 12-year-old boy rushed ir to me and said very excitedly, "Here are the Allies!" I went out and saw a British sergeant. I told him I was British, but it was difficult for him to believe me. I showed him my identification papers and told him to put me under arrest if he had any doubts. He put me in the charge of an officer who took me to the colonel of the regiment.

My friends in Caen had spread the tale that I was a Frenchman who had lost everything and was so shocked that I was unable to speak. Until this morning other French civilians with whom I had come in contact daily did not know I was English. There were collaborationists about who would have reported me at once if they had heard me talk.

Most of the French in Caen were definitely for us. They realised that the bombing was necessary, and were determined to accept it as worthwhile, although after some of the heaviest raids it is understandable they would occasionally let slip a few nasty things. And now I am longing to be in uniform again and have another smack at Jerry.

JAMES CONWAY (right), burly motor mechanic of the Gay Corsair, with other members of the crew. The little ship is only about 125 feet in length but is highly powered. See story above. *Photo, Keystone*

Squadron-Leader E. SPRAWSON, D.F.C., aged 33, was commissioned in the R.A.F. in 1934. He was awarded the D.F.C. on June 16, 1944, "for achievements worthy of the greatest praise" during many sorties over Germany. His latest adventure is related by himself in this page. *Photo, Evening Standard*



H.M.S. ARETHUSA, 5,220-ton cruiser, the story of whose bombardment of the Normandy coast is told here by her gunnery officer. Here seen at Malta before the war, she is armed with six 6-in., eight 4-in A.A., two 3-pounder guns, and six 21-in. torpedo tubes. *Photo, Fox*

We Shelled German Targets at 11 Miles Range

There is at least one German who can vouch for the accuracy of the guns of the cruiser H.M.S. Arethusa during the bombardment of Normandy. This unfortunate Hun was perched on the top of a chimney stack in a factory area acting as spotter for the shore batteries. The story is told by the Arethusa's gunnery officer, Lieut.-Commander H. T. Burchell, D.S.C.

I WOULDN'T have had his job for all the tea in China. We were nearly ten miles out, but we managed to get within about 25 yards of the chimney although we didn't actually hit it. We started a couple of large fires and we heard later that the chimney had been destroyed by our aircraft.

We were at the head of the column of bombarding battleships and cruisers, and our position was on the eastern flank. Our original target was a shore battery, but hardly had we commenced firing when a number of enemy destroyers came out of Le Havre and opened up on us. We switched our fire on them and they scuttled back to harbour without causing any trouble. We then returned to our original target and put it out of action.

Forward observers ashore sent back positions of targets which varied from the gentleman on the chimney to tanks, lorries, infantry and gun batteries. We also had a crack at a chateau which was being used as enemy headquarters. We were eleven miles out, but got at least three direct hits. The chaps ashore were very pleased with our shooting and one Brigadier signalled that we had broken up three counter-attacks on his troops. In all we got rid of 2,282 rounds of ammunition.

We were attacked many times by enemy aircraft at night, but were not hit. You would have thought that with all those thousands of ships lying offshore they couldn't have missed, but they did. We had two near misses, and that was all.

In a Burning Plane I Crashed in Yugoslavia

In some thousands of sorties to Yugoslavia there has been only one accident. It happened on the night of July 16, 1944, when a transport plane carrying personnel stalled above its goal and crashed from 400 feet. Among the survivors were Major Randolph Churchill, attached to the staff of the Maclean Mission to the National Liberation Movement, and Philip Jordan, war correspondent for Combined Press, who here relates the adventure.

WE are all being looked after with the greatest kindness and enthusiasm in various partisan hospitals and billets here, but the fact that in the fifteen hours we have so far been here it has been impossible for our generous hosts to attend and provide dressings for any but the seriously burned or fractured is some testimony to the grave shortage of medical supplies from which the army still suffers.

Our own medical supplies, along with everything we possessed, except the clothes which remain with us, were consumed in the fire. Our perished crew was drawn from Australia, Canada, South Africa and Britain. Our failure was a double tragedy, for there was no return journey for the wounded partisans who were waiting so patiently for us in the fields.

Nothing that I know is more forlorn than this corrugated country when you fly over it in the dark night. Once the last faint shimmer of Adriatic waters has gone it is as though the world has gone also, and you were in a void with neither purpose nor direction. The stars went out; the new moon had not risen. Even our wings were not visible except when summer lightning gave them substance. The only lights were sparks from exhausts which flew past like tracers. Once we flew over a road convoy, a row of moving lights that went out as we approached.

When the end came it came slowly. Far below us like an inverted constellation seen in an amber mirror, our own strip came suddenly to view. We saw the safety flare exchange recognition signals and then we went down in steep and steady spirals. Until we were within 400 feet all was well. It was dark when we hit the ground, but when those of us who were lucky enough to regain consciousness two minutes later opened our eyes the aircraft was illuminated by what seemed thousands of little candles, for the flames were burning from one end to the other, flicking in through every split joint.

There had been darkness and cold, but now there was infinite light. It was no more reality than the transformation scene in a pantomime. It was enchanting until I realised that my own hair was one of the candles and that the fallen jack was across my body making movement difficult. When we "put ourselves out" and went to the door it would not open, but they say we squeezed out between it and the aircraft's body.

Later when we had forced the door others walked or were carried out, but they could not get them all. A young British signaller from the North Country and a partisan were noted to have been searching for bodies in the flaming plane. Then all the Verey lights in the plane went off, and it collapsed.

I don't believe we quite knew what had happened. Maybe we don't know yet, for none of us has any sense of tragedy or destruction even though men we knew and liked and respected and one partisan girl were incinerated beside us. Maybe we haven't yet had time to feel anything but physical things, and they have hardly begun yet except for those who are badly hurt.

GERMAN PARACHUTE TROOPS drop during their abortive attempt to capture the Bosnian headquarters of Marshal Tito on May 25, 1944. Marshal Tito and Allied officers attached to his staff, including Major Randolph Churchill, the Prime Minister's son, had escaped into the mountains an hour before. A later adventure is related in this page. *Photo, Keystone*

Our Unwanted Cargo was an Unexploded Mine

After Landing Craft Tank 513 had touched down on the Normandy coast and her cargo of troops and vehicles had gone ashore her Commanding Officer, Lieut. D. S. Hawkey, R.N.V.R., discovered that there was every possibility of the craft being blown sky-high during the return trip.

I THOUGHT we had cleared the beach obstacles, but when we left I found one of the mines attached to the obstacles had become caught in our landing ramp. It was firmly lodged, and although it hadn't exploded it was liable to do so as soon as anything touched the detonator. My First Lieutenant, Sub-Lieutenant B. D. Davis, R.N.V.R., of Norbury, wanted to go for'ard and cut it loose, but I didn't think it advisable.

We came all the way back across the Channel with this mine stuck in our bows, and we couldn't lose it. I decided I couldn't enter harbour with it still there, so we tried to get rid of it. We rigged a wire from the ramp to the capstan with the idea of shaking the mine loose as we ran the ramp into the swell. I cleared the upper deck, and the party needed for working the capstan got under cover. I was standing on the bridge keeping well down, and giving orders to the capstan crew through the loud-hailer.

Unfortunately, we heaved in a bit too hard, and instead of shaking the mine loose we pulled it inboard. By a stroke of luck it fell sideways and the detonator was knocked off without exploding it. No time was wasted in throwing the mine over the side.

On our next trip we were left behind by the remainder of the flotilla when we developed engine trouble, and we lost sight of them before the engines were repaired. As soon as the engines were running I tried to catch up with the remainder of the flotilla, but I didn't see them even when we reached the beaches. I discovered later that they had had a spot of bother with some E-boats and I had passed out of sight of them.

After we had unloaded we towed back another landing craft that had been damaged. The weather was very bad—the worst known in the Channel for years—and as we had to tow the other craft alongside us, we sustained some minor damage. We reached port safely and underwent repairs. When we rejoined the flotilla I found we had been reported as missing, as the flotilla had lost touch with us after the engine trouble.

SALVAGE FEAT EXTRAORDINARY was performed by one of our L.C.T.s (Landing Craft Tanks) which, broken completely in two, returned to a southern port in Britain in the manner shown above. The stern half of the vessel, containing the engine, after necessary temporary repairs, took the bow half in tow and thus brought herself home! *Photo, British Newspaper Pool*

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

JULY 19, Wednesday *1,782nd day*

Western Front.—Faubourg de Vaucelles, Caen, captured by British 2nd Army.

Air.—U.S bombers attacked aircraft and chemical works in S. and S.W. Germany. R.A.F. bombed flying-bomb storage depot at Thiverny, near Paris.

Mediterranean.—Allied heavy bombers attacked factories in Munich area.

Italy.—U.S. troops entered the port of Leghorn.

Japan.—New Japanese cabinet formed under Gen. Koiso and Adm. Yonai, following resignation of Tojo and entire cabinet.

JULY 20, Thursday *1,783rd day*

Western Front.—2nd Army widened corridor in German front east of the Orne.

Air.—U.S. bombers from Britain and Mediterranean attacked German aircraft factories and oil plants. R.A.F. bombed rocket-site in northern France.

Russian Front.—In new offensive from Kovel, Russians made 90-mile breach in German defences.

Pacific.—U.S. forces landed on Guam in the Marianas.

Germany.—Announced that attempt on Hitler's life had been made by group of Army officers; Himmler appointed C.-in-C. of Home Army.

JULY 21, Friday *1,784th day*

Air.—U.S. bombers from Britain and Italy again attacked aircraft and ball-bearing factories in S. Germany.

Russian Front.—Ostrov, near Latvian border, captured by Red Army.

General.—Gen. Stuelpnagel, German commander in occupied France, injured in attack by French patriots.

JULY 22, Saturday *1,785th day*

Western Front.—Allies resumed attack on the Orne front.

Air.—R.A.F. attacked flying-bomb sites in N. France.

Russian Front.—Kholm, inside 1939 Polish frontier, stormed by Red Army. Ponevezh on Dvinsk-Kaunas railway also captured.

JULY 23, Sunday *1,786th day*

Mediterranean.—Ploesti oil installations bombed by Allied aircraft.

Germany.—Hitler issued Order of the Day to Army stating that "traitor clique" had been wiped out.

JULY 24, Monday *1,787th day*

Western Front.—Announced that Mr. Churchill had made three-day tour of Normandy.

Air.—R.A.F. made very heavy night attack on Kiel.

Russian Front.—Pskov, near Lake Peipus, captured by Russians; street fighting in Lublin.

Italy.—U.S. troops reached outskirts of Pisa.

Pacific.—U.S. troops established beach-head on Tinian Island, Marianas.

General.—Moscow announced formation at Kholm of Polish Committee of National Liberation. H.M. King George VI arrived in Italy to visit the forces.

JULY 25, Tuesday *1,788th day*

Air.—R.A.F. made very heavy night attack on Stuttgart.

Russian Front.—Lublin, railway junction S.E. of Warsaw, captured by Soviet troops.

Germany.—Nazi salute to replace military salute in all ranks of German army.

Western Front.—British 2nd Army began attack astride Falaise road S. of Caen; U.S. troops attacked W. of St. Lo.

Air.—R.A.F. dropped 12,000-lb. bombs on rocket site at Watten, Pas de Calais. Another heavy night attack on Stuttgart.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops completed encirclement of Lvov. U.S. fighter aircraft attacked airfields in Poland from Russian bases.

Mediterranean.—Allied bombers attacked tank works at Linz, Austria.

Pacific.—Allied warships and aircraft of Eastern Fleet bombarded harbour of Sabang, Sumatra.

Germany.—Goering and Goebbels appointed to organize total mobilization in Germany.

JULY 26, Wednesday *1,789th day*

Western Front.—U.S. armoured columns reached St. Giles and Marigny, W. of St. Lo.

Air.—R.A.F. bombers attacked railway junction at Givors, S. of Lyons. Mosquitoes bombed Hamburg.

Russian Front.—Narva, Estonian border town, and Deblin on the Vistula, captured by Soviet troops; Tilsit, East Prussia, bombed by Russian aircraft.

Mediterranean.—Allied heavy bombers attacked military installations in Vienna area. U.S fighters returned to Italy from Russia, bombing Rumanian bases on the way.

JULY 27, Thursday *1,790th day*

Western Front.—Strong counter-attacks against Allied advance S. of Caen.

Russian Front.—Dvinsk and Rezeknes (Latvia), Siauliai (Lithuania), Lvov, Bizlystok and Stanislavov captured by Soviet troops.

Air.—Radio and electrical factories in Belgium attacked by U.S. bombers. R.A.F. bombed flying-bomb sites.

General.—Soviet Government signed agreement with Polish Committee of National Liberation.

JULY 28, Friday *1,791st day*

Western Front.—Coutances cleared of the enemy by Allied armoured columns.

Russian Front.—Brest Litovsk, Yaroslav and Przemysl captured by Red Army.

Air.—U.S. bombers attacked Leuna oil plant at Merseburg. R.A.F. bombed supply depots for flying bombs and made night attacks on Stuttgart and Hamburg.

Mediterranean.—Allied heavy bombers attacked Ploesti oil installations.

JULY 29, Saturday *1,792nd day*

Air.—U.S. bombers again attacked Leuna oil plant. R.A.F. bombed rocket supply depot near Watten. Mosquitoes bombed Frankfurt by night.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops reached Jelgava (Mitua), 22 miles from Riga.

Far East.—U.S. Super-Fortresses bombed steel centre of Anshan, Mukden and Tangku, port of Tientsin.

Balkans.—Allied land, sea and air forces raided Himara, on coast of Albania.

JULY 30, Sunday *1,793rd day*

Western Front.—British 2nd Army launched attack pivoting on Caumont.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops broke through towards E. Prussia from bridge-heads west of the Niemen.

Italy.—Eighth Army closed in on Florence.

Mediterranean.—Allied bombers attacked airfield and aircraft works near Budapest.

JULY 31, Monday *1,794th day*

Western Front.—Avranches occupied by U.S. armoured columns.

Air.—Munich and Ludwigshaven areas attacked by more than 1,200 U.S. bombers. R.A.F. bombed flying-bomb supply depot and railway junction at La Roche.

Russian Front.—Soviet forces captured Jelgava (Mitau), Latvia. Street-fighting in Kaunas, Lithuania. Siedice, east of Warsaw, captured by Red Army.

Mediterranean.—Allied bombers attacked oil plants at Ploesti and Bucharest.

Pacific.—New Allied landings at Sansapor, in Dutch New Guinea.

General.—Adm. Sir Bruce Fraser appointed C.-in-C. Eastern Fleet in succession to Adm. Sir James Somerville.

★ *Flash-backs* ★

1940

July 23. Provisional Czechoslovak Government formed in London, recognized by Britain.

July 30. Demobilization of French North African and Syrian armies announced.

1941

July 20. Stalin became People's Commissar for Defence of the Soviet Union.

July 30. U.S.S.R.-Polish agreement signed in London; Polish army to be formed in Russia.

August 1. Diplomatic relations between Britain and Finland were broken off.

1942

July 20. Russians captured bridge-heads at Voronezh on Don.

1943

July 19. Marshalling yards at Rome bombed by U.S. aircraft.

July 21. National Committee of Free Germany formed in Russia.

July 22. Palermo, Sicily, captured by Allied forces.

July 25. Mussolini resigned; Badoglio became Prime Minister.

THUNDERBOLT FIGHTER-BOMBER, undercarriage wheels about to fold flush with the wings, roars into the cloud-flecked sky above Normandy and on to attack a target. A U.S. aircraft, it is carrying two 250 lb. bombs slung beneath each wing and an auxiliary petrol tank under the fuselage. Armed with eight 0.5 in. machine-guns, the Thunderbolt has a wing-span of 41 ft., length of 32 ft. 8 in., speed of 400 m.p.h. *Photo, Associated Press*

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

FIFTEEN hundred miles south-west of Wake Island and 1,600 miles east of Manila in the Philippine Islands lies Guam, the southernmost island of the Marianas group, and one of the stepping stones across the great Pacific Ocean. Before the war Guam was one of the stopping places for the China Clippers of Pan-American Airways on the San Francisco–Philippines–Hong-Kong route. Indeed, it was the last stop before reaching the Philippines. That was its importance then, as now. It became an American possession in 1898, during the war between the United States and Spain. For America it became a naval station. This island, 32 miles long and ten wide at the widest part, had a pre-war population of about 21,000, mostly Chamorro, one of the Malayan families. Fewer than 1,000 non-natives lived there normally. Its interior is jungle, with savanna, sword grass, and liana-hung trails. Its highest hill is 1,334 feet high. (*See* map p. 167.)

This island of 206 square miles received a 17 days' naval and air bombardment from an American task force prior to the landing made on July 20, 1944—with the support of carrier aircraft and surface combat units of the Fifth Fleet—by U.S. Marines and Army assault troops. The landing operations were directed by the naval officer who commanded the amphibious operations against Sicily. The landings were made on both sides of the five-miles peninsula of Orote which juts out from the west coast of the island. Wave after wave of dive-bombers added their power to the blast of shells that swept the Japanese positions. The Japanese cannot withstand this deadly dual form of bombardment.

SEA-AIR power has shown its effectiveness already in the Pacific. As the war against Japan proceeds to its inevitable end in the defeat for the first time of that predatory people, the employment of marine-air power will rise continually to ever-increasing fury. The configuration of Japan proper lends itself to attack by sea-borne aircraft—a long series of narrow islands running in a gentle crescent. But air power directed against Japan will not all be sea-borne, as the Boeing B-29's have already demonstrated. With the capture of Saipan and Tinian islands, and the imminent capture of Guam and Rota islands, the American forces will hold the four southernmost islands of a chain which runs almost due north to Tokyo itself. The science of the construction of take-off points for aircraft has developed enormously during this war, and one of the most important features of military engineering is now the ability to construct air strips where before this war it would have been thought impossible to do so.

MOREOVER the increasing power of aircraft engines—which has risen since the war began from between 1,000 and 1,500 h.p. to a range that now reaches 3,000 h.p.—has made it possible to take off under conditions that would have been dangerous before. Even on rocky islands, or on tropical coral atolls, it is possible to make strip runways, and so get aircraft up and down. The innumerable islands of the Pacific Ocean in the area where the war against Japan is now raging provide a great number of fixed aircraft "carriers" whose value is to that huge war zone as was the value of Malta to the Mediterranean. The war in the Pacific is therefore still at the stage of a fight for the possession of fixed air bases, each new victory pushing forward the advanced landing fields towards the great combat areas where Japanese power will have to be defeated to overthrow Hirohito and his robber barons.

The Japanese have demonstrated how clever they are at maintaining communications, by running ships along the coast of China. Before their communications with Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies and the Philippines can be seriously cut, it will be necessary to move the air bases forward island by island and so provide air cover on a scale that will make even the air cover provided against the German submarine menace seem puny by comparison. Moreover, the rear areas will then still need air cover, and this is where the value of the islands now being captured will excel in strategical value to the Allies their previous use to Japan, for the Allied carrier task forces will penetrate into the inner hostile waters with a protective land-based air force in their rear.

As I see it, the sea-air war against Japan divides into two strategic zones—one contained within the area bounded by the Aleutians, Midway, the Gilberts, the Solomons, New Guinea and the Philippines; and the other bounded by India, Australia, New Guinea and the Philippines. In each area the possession of the Philippines is the key. Every move made by the American naval and air forces under Admiral Nimitz points to the Philippines as the first great strategic objective, and the underlying strategy of General MacArthur is corroborative pressure towards a common goal. It is within the southern half of the first-named great area that air pressure has been most applied, and wherever its power has been used to aid the occupational forces the Japanese have been squeezed to destruction and defeat. The Japanese pre-war air development of the Palau islands provides a useful stepping stone on the way to Mindanao.

Meanwhile over Europe great air blows have been maintained against the German dominated Continent, both in the fighting fields and in the strategic zones lying within them where industry strives to produce the weapons for the enemy. Here I regret to have to mention that Warburton, the greatest of our photographic pilots, is posted missing.

THE work of the aircrews who undertake these tasks is arduous, dangerous, less spectacular, perhaps, than the fighting and bombing; but it is the basis of our air-war intelligence. Often these men have flown unarmed aircraft far into enemy territory to secure photographs, relying on the speed of their aircraft and the height at which they flew for safety. Not always did they return. One pilot I knew flew an unarmed Mosquito on a mission to the Salzburg area, and did not get back; he had made many flights before, passing over Europe almost as the airline pilots did before the war began; on that run over the Austrian Alps he was unlucky. (*See* illus. page 215.)

It is remarkable how front-line troops can withstand the terrible bombardments rained upon them from the air. Thousands of tons of bombs fall upon their defences. Yet our advance does not move swiftly forward afterwards. Why? I believe it is due to over-concentration of bombardment. We now bomb heavily only 2,000 yards from our own troops and in a concentrated enemy-held zone. Just outside that zone the enemy are as secure as our own troops. The science of bombing forward troops has advanced little from the last war except in weight of attack. In the interval the science of defence in depth has been developed. It seems that concentrated blast attack from the air must give place to an aerial adaptation of the creeping barrage of artillery.

Tedder's Carpet Laid Down on Western Front

ONCE GERMAN FORTIFIED POSITIONS near Sannerville, south of Caen, this carpet of craters was laid by R.A.F. Lancasters and Halifaxes preceding a British offensive in Normandy. Highly concentrated and astonishingly accurate bombing completely obliterated the defensive works. Bombs with slightly delayed action were used, so that the ground should be cratered so deeply as to be impassable by enemy armour—development of the famous technique associated with Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, G.C.B. (see p. 576, vol. 7).

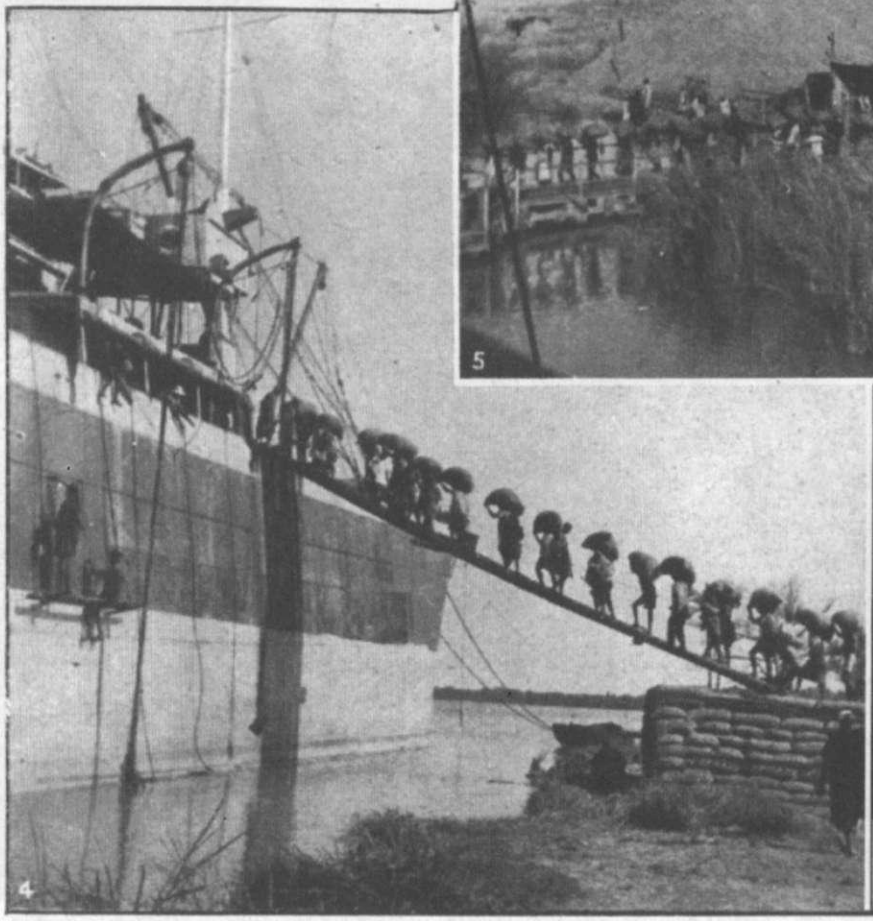
Photo, British Official

Britain's Colonies in the War: No. 12—Gambia

LINKED WITH BRITAIN FOR OVER 350 YEARS, since 1588 when Queen Elizabeth granted a patent to English merchants to trade with the country, is Gambia in West Africa, which became a Colony in 1888. After this war had broken out—especially when from June 1940 to May 1943 the Mediterranean was closed to Allied shipping—Bathurst, capital of Gambia, gained importance as one of the stopping-places on the West African air transport routes.

Gambia, with an area of some 4,132 square miles and a population of 199,520 has several organizations to help the Allied effort, including the Gambian Women Workers, composed of Europeans and non-Europeans; during the early days of the Battle of the Atlantic these voluntarily assisted and cared for shipwrecked seamen; they also helped to equip Gambians serving in the Army. Volunteers for the Army, Navy and Merchant Navy have been many. Products useful to the war effort include vast quantities of ground nuts or monkey nuts (oil from which is used in the manufacture of margarine and soap) and rice, hides, rubber and wax.

Millet and rice are the staple food of the people, and the home-growing of these crops helps greatly towards easing difficulties arising from war-time reductions of other supplies; it also releases tons of valuable shipping space for other vital service in the cause of the United Nations.



TRANSPORT DIFFICULTIES ARE SURMOUNTED by employment of ox-drawn carts (1), and paired containers carried shoulder-wise (2); the latter are here filled with millet, one of the staple foods of the natives. A Gambian who qualified as radio operator in the Merchant Navy (3). From a gigantic mound of harvested ground nuts (5), bags weighing 90 lb. are carried up a precarious gangway to an ocean-going vessel moored at the very edge of Kuntaur, 150 miles up the Gambia River (4).

Photos, L. H. Saunders, G. McCormack, Sport & General

Editor's Postscript

"WHEN will the War end?" was the pointblank question put to me by a friend one sultry afternoon recently when we sat down to tea at his country cottage after enjoying the excitement of watching a Tempest shoot down a flying bomb nearby on the Sussex weald. Although my main preoccupation since September 1939 has been the study of the War News, I should not venture an answer to such a question with the slightest belief that my opinion was more likely to be accurate than that of my barber, who had given me some astonishing information about pilotless planes which I knew to be amusingly wrong. But I could at least tell my friend with absolute confidence that the prophecies of the astrologers made in solemn conference at Harrogate towards the end of 1941 that the War would end in a victory for the Allies by January 31, 1942, did not fit in with the facts as I knew them! Indeed, one of the minor victories of the War has been its devastating exposure of these persons who used to make a profitable business of interpreting the secrets of the stars for the amazement of the credulous.

ONE of the most high-spirited women of my acquaintance is a lady of seventy-nine: the mother of five stalwart sons and four tall and elegant daughters! Her husband, a dear friend of mine, died in 1916, while all her sons nobly discharged their duties in the last War and came through it scatheless. She has been living in recent years in a flat in a North London suburb where, in the second week of the flying-bomb blitz, the building containing her flat was so badly blasted that she lay for nine hours amongst the ruins of her home before she could be released. Knowing her extraordinary vitality and remembering her light-hearted nature, I am not surprised that after she had recovered from the shock, in an emergency hospital to which she had been rushed clad only in her nightdress and with a blanket around her, she seemed little the worse for her exciting experience. She was kept under observation for a week before being removed to the home of her eldest son in a southern suburb, where flying-bombs have been even more numerous than in the north. When it was necessary to bring her travelling clothes from her bomb-blasted home to fit her up for removal, not one item of her clothing could be found at her wrecked flat: she had nothing beyond the nightdress in which she had been rescued from the wreckage! Looters had removed her entire wardrobe. In Berlin these looters would have been found and shot out of hand. It might be a good thing to invent some sort of punishment just a little short of shooting for our own looters: for looters, especially in circumstances such as these, are vermin, be they English or German.

THE Finnish ruling class offers us another illustration of the truth that people who have struggled hard for freedom themselves often struggle quite as hard to prevent others being free. While Finland was under the harsh domination of the Tsars, it had the sympathy of the civilized world. When it was freed it began at once to impose, as far as it could, an even more brutal domination on the Karelian people. In 1918-19 the atrocities committed by Finns filled those who knew about them with horror. The object was to prevent the Karelians from throwing in their lot with Russia and force upon them subjugation to Finland. Once more we have proof of the correctness of what Lord Palmerston, with his wide experience as Foreign Minister, said about "a passion in the human heart stronger than the desire to be free from injustice and wrong—that is the desire to inflict injustice and wrong upon others." Clemenceau's opinion was the same: "I have worked for liberty for forty years," he observed in 1914, "but the Frenchman's idea of liberty is suppressing somebody else." Lord Salisbury, when he was Prime Minister, saw concealed behind most religious movements and "great moral efforts" what he called "the steady enemy of human liberty—the desire of men to grasp power, to force others to conform to their ideas." Oliver Cromwell put the same thought into other words when he remarked bitterly: "Everyone loves liberty but none will give it."

WHERE Clemenceau and Lord Salisbury went wrong, it seems to me, was in attributing to Frenchmen as a race and to men in general this stupid craving for power. The mass of mankind do not feel anything of the kind. They want to be left alone and they are quite ready to leave others alone—if their minds are not perverted and their imaginations luridly fired by the incitements of cunning or crazy agitators. Palmerston was himself such an agitator when he stirred up the British nation to the point of making war (the Crimean War) on Russia in 1854. He was a cunning one. Hitler is a crazy one, as were the Finnish rulers who succeeded men of ability and good sense and filled the minds of the Finns with foolish visions of spreading Finnish rule as far as the Ural Mountains! Some of those who, during the time when they struggled towards freedom, passed for able, sensible men, have revealed themselves in their true characters since they became rulers. One of them, named Tanner, was a Co-operative Society leader, well-known to co-operators in Britain. He has been one of the most obstinate believers in a Nazi victory over the United Nations. I wonder which side some of our Co-operative leaders would come down on if they had to choose, like Tanner, between supporting National Socialism, which is Fascism, or real Socialism of the Russian type?

Captain F. J. WALKER, C.B., D.S.O., R.N., whose death was announced on July 10, 1944. Ships under his command sank 20 U-boats, 15 of which were destroyed by the famous 2nd Escort Group of which he was senior officer (see pp. 710-711, Vol. 7).

Photo, Sport and General

A PRIVATE in a French Canadian regiment lately in Britain, now in France, told me how he escaped from France two years ago because he was disgusted with Petain, Laval, and all the Vichy gang. He got into Spain across the Pyrenees. He was a Frenchman of France; many others like him escaped. Also there were German deserters from the army of occupation. Reaching the Spanish frontier, they had to explain themselves to the authorities. This they managed to do fairly well and arrangements were made to send them to their respective "fatherlands." They had to go through a lot of examinations, and any who did not answer up quickly were turned over to the Spanish police, who passed them on to agents of Hitler's Gestapo, and they were sent back to France. But a good many made their escape, and some of them are back in Europe now, like the "French Canadian" whom I met.

AN American soldier who watched a cricket match at Lord's could not understand why four members of one team did not go to the wicket at all. He was told that their side had "declared"—that is, decided not to send any more of its men in to bat and put the other side in. He shook his head bewildered. He was equally puzzled by the slowness of the run-getting. One batsman was in for nearly an hour and got fewer than fifty runs. In America, this soldier said, such dead-alive performers would have had lemonade bottles thrown at them. He contrasted the solemnity and leisureliness of it with the brisk excitement of baseball—as I have previously done in this page—and said he could not discover what the English found so attractive in watching cricket. There were thousands of people at Lord's that day. They had all paid for admission. What was more, they all seemed to be enjoying themselves. He gave it up! As, of course, others of us would be baffled in contemplation of the "sportsmanship" of those who throw lemonade bottles!

SOMEONE remarked the other day that the Americans, who are with us in such large numbers, winning, like Macbeth, "golden opinions from all sorts of people," seldom seem to use the expressions with which the talkies have made us so familiar and which most cinema-goers suppose to be integral parts of the language spoken in the United States. They do not, for instance, speak of undertakers as "morticians" or say "they funeralized" instead of buried somebody. We too have expressions that appear in advertisements and sometimes on shop fronts which we do not use in conversation. I have seen lately a rat-catcher described as a "rodent operator," and over a shop selling powder and make-up the word "cosmetician." I remember the late Sir Henry Lunn being immensely amused by "mortician," and he also quoted with glee from a price-list issued by a Methodist church in America:

For smoothing the features of deceased—one dollar.

For imparting to the features a look of contentment—two dollars.

For giving to the late departed the appearance of Christian peace and resignation—five dollars.

How much would be charged for making it appear that the deceased was really glad to be dead was not stated.

British 17-pounders Pursuing the 'Tigers'

IMPROVED IN BRITISH FACTORIES by the fitting of a longer-range and more powerful gun—the 17-pounder—American-built Sherman tanks, which can out-manoeuvre the enemy 60-ton Tiger, claimed to be the biggest tank in the world, on any type of ground can now out-fight it. At over 1,000 yards the Sherman's hitting power is terrific. Above, they are seen rumbling to action through a Normandy village near Caen. In its original form the British 17-pounder was a wheeled anti-tank gun and is still used as such. *Photo, British Official*

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